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WORLD OF SPORT
Jordan believes in Magic
It's ALL in the WORLD OF SPORT TODAY

US to urge Assad to keep talking

DAVID MAKOVSKY

US Secretary of State Warren Christopher will today ask Syrian President Hafez Assad to permit his delegates to continue talks with Israel in the coming months, should Prime Minister Shimon Peres announce early elections, a senior Clinton administration official indicated last night.

While neither Israeli nor American officials expect a breakthrough during the election season, both sides see value in keeping the talks on track.

The feeling is that Israel and Syria can lay the groundwork for the tough decisions to be made after the elections. There is also concern that a diplomatic vacuum would be had, as understandings already achieved could unravel, thereby making it harder for talks to resume after the election.

The senior US official noted that Assad has said he wants to reach an agreement this year.

At a joint press conference after two hours of talks in Jerusalem, Peres denied informing Christopher of his plans for early elections. He said he would first inform the electorate, and an address to the nation is tentatively scheduled for next Thursday night (February 15).

When asked about early elections, Christopher said, "I believe we can continue the peace negotiations under any scenario here, and that is what is our determination to do. Our role is to try to facilitate the negotiations and to press forward, and we shall do so under whatever scenario, whatever decision is made by the Israeli government."

While the Syrians have agreed to a broader definition of normalization of ties, Peres noted there was also a "beginning" of a discussion on Golan-related security arrangements.

A senior administration official insisted there was progress on all issues under negotiation with Syria, but did not elaborate.

But an Israeli official said that "the only progress [on security arrangements] was that both sides verbally identified the differences between us in this sphere."

The Syrian media have complained about the lack of progress in the talks.

US officials indicated last night that Binyamin Netanyahu canceled a scheduled meeting with Christopher.

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Mari from the Negev Beduin town of Rahat and Rinat from Kibbutz Beit Kama, both 11, plant a tree together yesterday at a Jewish National Fund site near their homes. Some 250,000 people planted trees at JNF ceremonies around the country, including President Ezer Weizman, Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, and Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg, who planted seedlings in the burnt forests of the Jerusalem Corridor. At the Knesset Forest on Mt. Scopus, Speaker Shevah Weiss and other MKs planted in honor of the House's 47th anniversary, along with Israel Scouts and members of Chai Lifeline, children suffering from cancer or Cerebral Palsy. The mayors of Kfar Sava and Tira planted together. "This is a true symbol of peace," JNF head Moshe Rivlin said. (Joe Miskolc)

Labor primaries set for March 25

SARAH HONIG
and LIAT COLLINS

THE Labor Knesset primaries will be held on March 25, a day before the Likud's.

Prime Minister Shimon Peres reportedly decided on the date in a meeting with party secretary-general Nissim Zivli and Justice Minister David Liba'i yesterday. The decision, however, was not officially announced.

Zivli sought to deny that earlier primaries indicate early elections. "The scheduling of the primaries will be finally resolved on Sunday, but even if the primaries are held in March, it doesn't mean that we are going to have early elections. One has nothing to do with the other," he maintained.

The Labor primaries had already been moved back from June to mid-April.

The Likud had long ago scheduled its primaries for March 26, but there are already some in the party pushing to move them back a month.

The Labor decision to have the primaries just a day before the

Likud's is seen as part of an effort to overshadow the Likud vote.

In the meantime, yesterday's meeting between Labor Knesset faction chairman Ra'anan Cohen and Likud faction chairman Moshe Katsav failed to produce an agreed upon date for early elections.

Cohen said Peres would decide on the issue of early elections on February 15. Katsav said the Likud would support early elections, but no dates were chosen pending Peres's official announcement.

Cohen, who initiated the meeting, told Katsav that Labor intends to introduce legislation calling for electoral reform and direct regional elections which will take effect in the year 2000. The proposal includes dividing the Knesset into 60 MKs elected regionally and 60 nationally.

Katsav said the Likud would discuss the subject today.

The two also reacted to the news that the Likud and Tsomet will run together.

"There's no doubt Tsomet has made the deal of its life and that Tsomet leader Rafael Eitan has succeeded in getting himself and his people excellent places on the joint list. I'm only surprised that the Likud MKs are permitting it without batting an eye," Cohen said.

Katsav returned the dig, saying: "There would be no discussion in Labor about bringing the elections forward if Syrian President Hafez Assad would agree to having his photo taken with Peres."

Katsav said he believes Likud voters will support the joint list, closing the gap between Netanyahu and Peres and giving the Likud and Tsomet more Knesset seats. He admitted that a number of Likud MKs had expressed opposition, some because they think it will harm the party and some because it affects their chances of re-election.

David Mena said the deal

Merger with Tsomet rocks Likud hopefuls

SARAH HONIG

independent entity. By the year 2000, Tsomet will be as dead as the Liberal Party."

Religious parties eye merger possibilities, Page 2

Likud opponents were bolder, though the clearest criticism came from a non-candidate, former defense minister Moshe Arens, whose protégé Netanyahu once was. Arens doubted the "two parties together would necessarily garner more votes. My intuition tells me that the sum total may be less than its parts. I hope there was meticulous examination before this fateful move was made."

Netanyahu strenuously denied that he had promised the defense portfolio in a possible future Likud-Tsomet government to Eitan. "Eitan did not ask for anything personally," Netanyahu insisted. "He is a true partner, an important partner at present and in the future government, but there is no portfolio allocation now."

"The public very clearly prefers large electoral blocs and is fed up to the teeth with small mini-parties, among which there is no ideological distinction but which are kept apart by conflicting personal ambitions," Eitan argued. "This move is not last-minute or sudden. It was contemplated for a long

time, for as much as a year and a half."

The decision to field a single ticket, reportedly crystallized around three upbeat polls conducted by Gallup for the Likud and Tsomet. Initially the National Religious Party also figured in the idea, but the polls led to the mutual conclusion that all sides were better off without the NRP.

"Three polls examining the chances of a possible Likud-Tsomet bloc from different angles all came back with the same results, namely that the bloc would bring a greater number of votes than the two lists would garner in separate tickets," said Gallup chairman Ya'acov Levy. "The fact that the same result cropped up again and again makes it something we think could be relied on and not an accidental return or something which we can ascribe to a margin of error."

Though Levy did not release any figures, sources in both the Likud and Tsomet speak of 44 Knesset seats jointly, against 37 or 38 separately. In 1992, the two lists won 40 seats together.

The polls also showed the NRP doing better outside the Tsomet-Likud framework, and the Likud and Tsomet benefiting from not running with the NRP. This version is corroborated by all three parties, where sources agree that the decision for the NRP to stay out of the deal was reached amicably.

Likud, Tsomet MKs split over deal

LIAT COLLINS

MKs from both the Likud and Tsomet yesterday expressed criticism of their parties' decision to form a joint Knesset list.

Ovadia Eli threatened to resign over the issue. "It does not serve the Likud in its main aim of bringing [Binyamin] Netanyahu to the prime minister's post," Eli said.

Although he was the most vocal among the Likud critics of the deal, he was not the only one to question it.

Meir Sheerit said he would not resign over it, but he considers the agreement to be detrimental. "It might be good at giving the feeling of unity, but if Rafael Eitan is really interested in that, he should have just withdrawn his bid for the premiership without any preconditions," he said.

"Netanyahu and the Likud could win this election without any favors from Eitan. Surveys even show that Tsomet's power is declining. And if there has to be an agreement, [why] put [Tsomet MK] Haim Dayan before [the Likud's] Shaul Amos? For half the price we could have made an agreement with David Levy, who's our flesh and blood."

He said Levy's new party and Molelet could be the ones to gain from the pact. Sheerit also condemned the fact he first heard of the agreement from media reports.

would push Likud candidates into positions too far down the Knesset list.

Yossi Ahimeir said he is not confident of the accuracy of the results of the polls showing the Likud would significantly benefit from the deal.

Other Likud MKs were more optimistic. Dan Tichon said that in the short term some Likud MKs were worried about the agreement, but it would pay off on election day.

Ariel Weinstein praised the agreement, saying it would "put the Likud back on the map and puts Netanyahu back in the picture."

Eitan presented the agreement to a meeting of the Tsomet Knesset faction and party elders last night.

Although most Likud MKs said they had been completely in the dark about the deal, some 30 Tsomet members were aware of it before the news broke Sunday, apparently from a Likud leak. Tsomet's party council had authorized continued negotiations with the Likud 10 days ago.

Some Tsomet MKs, however, are urging extreme caution in signing a deal with the Likud, basing themselves largely on the experience of the last Histadrut

elections, in which they believe they were sold out after making an agreement with the Likud candidate.

MK Pini Badash, one of the few Tsomet MKs willing to speak to reporters on the record, criticized the agreement, warning that it could affect Tsomet's independence. After the meeting with Eitan, Badash apparently retracted the criticism, having been convinced the deal did not involve a merger between the two parties and each would be able to go its own way after the elections.

Sources in Tsomet rejected the claim by some Likud MKs that Tsomet MKs would move over to a coalition with Labor if it returns to power. "Theoretically, we could leave for another party," said one, "but it's extremely unlikely. It would look too bad."

Molelet leader Rehavam Ze'evi was noncommittal, calling for national unity but sarcastically noting the two parties would not want him in on such a deal, because "I'm too nationalistic."

David Levy said he believes his party would benefit from voters dissatisfied with the Tsomet deal. Meretz MK Benny Temkin joked with dissatisfied Likud MKs: "If that's the generosity Netanyahu shows in making deals, it's lucky he's not negotiating with the Syrians."

No results in meeting of PLO executive committee

EL-ARISH (Reuters) - The PLO executive committee convened in this Egyptian town yesterday to discuss the formation of a Palestinian cabinet following last month's elections in the West Bank and Gaza.

Under PLO regulations, the 18-man executive committee is to name the interim government following election of an 88-member legislature and president of a self-rule cabinet. Only 11 members showed up. One called in sick, others were protesting against the Oslo accords, participants said.

"We are going to discuss the formation of the Palestinian government, final status issues, the upcoming Palestinian National Council meeting, and other developments after the elections," said committee member Abdullah Hourani.

As part of the agreement, Israel expects the PLO to cancel clauses in the Palestinian Covenant calling for Israel's destruction. The executive committee is going to discuss convening the PNC to make the changes. One PLO official said there would be another executive committee meeting in Gaza after Ramadan before the PNC meets.

IDF not drafting immigrants over 30

ON LEVY

THE IDF is not drafting immigrants over 30, while it awaits a government decision on the matter, which has been under consideration for two years, IDF sources said yesterday.

The IDF has made the drafting of the immigrants, expected to be expensive, conditional upon external funding.

According to the original plan, immigrants were to be taken into the army for a short period of short basic training, then placed in reserve units.

Army sources said the drafting of older immigrants has a certain social value, but their contribution to the IDF is marginal.

They said the decision on this should be made by the government.

The sources said that until two years ago, the immigrants themselves had been pressing the army to induct them, but the government's decision to grant them social benefits without having to serve had reduced the pressure.

Netanyahu sacrificed Likud list in his bid for the premiership

ANALYSIS

SARAH HONIG

polls inauspicious for Tsomet, but it's the party most endangered by the Third Way. The new party and Tsomet are both cut from the same Labor cloth and both appeal to the same activist vestiges of what used to be Mafap.

Tsomet is a party on the decline, and the Likud looked like a very cozy haven for it. The shrewd Eitan will effortlessly bring in an eight-member faction to the next Knesset, something he could not have hoped to achieve running on his own against the Third Way. The Likud, for its part, has throughout its history offered asylum to down-and-out political orphans. None of the partners the party has taken on in its various incarnations was a party with a future.

The Liberals are a striking example, as were the remnants of Rafi and other fragments and splinters the Likud picked up along the way.

None of them ever brought the Likud votes. Eitan's

charisma will have some appeal, but many of his quasi-Laborite supporters might have a hard time casting a Likud ballot.

But Netanyahu may have needed solidly secular Rafal to get the most out of his likely religious support. This might sound strange considering Eitan's almost anti-religious reputation. Those around Netanyahu, though, think that many haredim will go to the polls in the first round to vote for their Knesset list, and will vote for Netanyahu. But if Eitan remained in the race and forced a run-off, the haredim would not bother to vote in an election which will not directly involve their list. Netanyahu must make it in the first round, it is said, or not at all.

Netanyahu also believes that the tell-it-like-it-is endorsement by the earthy Eitan cannot do him harm. Or as former prime minister Yitzhak Shamir argues: "The move is a great psychological boost for the Likud. It will give our members renewed faith, vitality, and vigor - and that's nothing to scoff at in our situation."

Netanyahu: I won't meet with Arafat

SARAH HONIG

LIKUD Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu said last night that if he is elected prime minister, he will not personally meet or deal with Yasser Arafat.

Replying to interviewer Dan Shilon's questions on Channel 2, Netanyahu said: "I will not meet with Arafat, will not chase him nor stroll hand in hand with him in the hotels of Europe. If the Palestinian Authority meets basic conditions, such as giving up its aim of destroying Israel and ceasing to support terrorism, then I will have my people deal with the PA. ... Arafat has gotten into the habit of fomenting a crisis and then summoning [Prime Minister Shimon] Peres to make demands. This will stop."

Netanyahu argued that "leadership is the fusion between ideology and reality. We are inheriting a reality which none of us wanted, but with which we shall have to cope."

Netanyahu said he would close the Orient House in Jerusalem and "throw Jibril Rajoub out of town."

Religious parties eye merger possibilities

HERB KEINON

THE Tsomet-Likud merger has the remaining opposition parties looking hard at one another to see if they, too, can join together in some kind of political tango.

Zevulun Orlev, political secretary of the National Religious Party, said he is "very supportive" of a united religious front that would include the NRP, Shas, Agudat Yisrael, and Degel Hatorah. The unifying feature of such a front, he said, "is the government's negative attitude to Judaism, the Left's preference for universality rather than Judaism."

What all the religious parties agree on is the need to give more Jewish character to the state.

Orlev says that although the parties may differ on their diplomatic planks, "none of the parties looks at Eretz Yisrael as just another piece of real estate. A united religious front in the elections would be a major achievement," he said.

Orlev realizes that it would mean that the Zionist NRP would be running with parties that do not share their Zionist zeal.

"The relationship of the haredi parties to the state is now one of respect," he said. "Shas was a partner with this government, and the haredi parties participated with the Begin government. If the socialist Mapam can sit in the

same party with the capitalist Shinui because of agreement on a political plank, then we can sit together because of an agreement over the need for more Judaism in the state."

Orlev said that although he hopes such a common front will come to fruition, he is not overly hopeful. "Aryeh Deri has said he is interested, as has Avraham Shapira," Orlev said. "But this is not enough. With these parties you don't only need the politicians, but also the rabbis, and it would mean having Rabbi [Eliezer] Schach sit with Rabbi [Ovadia] Yosef, and Rabbi Yosef with Rabbi [Mordechai] Eliahu. I'm not optimistic that this will come about."

What Orlev believes is possible, however, is a deal whereby the NRP will join forces with Meimad. He said there are high-level negotiations going on between the NRP and Meimad, which has not yet decided to run in the next elections, about forming a common front. These negotiations include discussions between NRP head Zevulun Hammer and Meimad's Rabbi Yehuda Amital, now a minister in the Prime Minister's Office.

Orlev said the prospect of

Amital, ostracized by some in the national religious camp because he is part of the Peres government, sitting with Hanan Porat, the NRP's settlement activist, should not seem any more strange than seeing Dan Meridor share the same Likud Party with Ariel Sharon.

NRP spokesman Yitzhak Rath said that no one in the NRP supports joining the Likud-Tsomet merger. According to Rath, the polls consistently showed that the Likud and Tsomet would benefit from the move, but that there would be no substantial gain if the NRP joined in as well. Instead, Rath said, the survey showed the NRP would benefit from remaining outside the axis, because its uniqueness as a religious party would then be more obvious.

The Council of Jewish Communities in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, meanwhile, renewed its call for all the opposition parties - including the NRP - to join in a common front.

"The time has come for everyone to understand the power of unity," said council spokesman Yechiel Leiter. The council came out with a call two weeks ago to the right-wing parties to form a united front in the upcoming elections.



Likud Chairman Benjamin Netanyahu greets young supporters at Ramat Gan's Blich High School yesterday, where a joint Likud-Tsomet list will run in today's mock elections. Netanyahu said the joint list would bring real peace, since it has the best candidates in all fields. (Alan Rof/Israel Sun)

Bill would lift pre-election media ban

EVELYN GORDON

THERE would no longer be a ban on broadcasting events in which Knesset candidates are participants 30 days before the elections, according to a bill approved by the Knesset Law Committee for first reading yesterday.

Both the MKs and representatives of the electronic media agreed unanimously that this ban, instituted in the early days of the state, was inappropriate in an age when there are not only two television stations, but cable channels and foreign stations available via satellite as well. If the prime minister has a state meeting two weeks before the election, it is ridiculous for Israelis to have to watch it

on CNN because Channel 1 is forbidden to broadcast it, MKs said.

Committee chairman Dedi Zucker (Meretz) said if the ban were lifted, the media could be relied on to stick to coverage of legitimate news events and not use their power to tout any particular party. However, Avraham Ravitz (UT) said he had much less faith in the media, and suggested including a specific requirement for equal time and balanced coverage. The committee will decide on this suggestion after the bill is returned to committee.

The committee also decided that candidates for prime minister would not get extra advertising time over and above the total allotted their parties. However, if there is a run-off election for prime minister, the two run-off candidates should be given an equal, but as yet unspecified, amount of advertising time, the committee decided.

It also decided that the ban on campaign propaganda in the electronic media, other than the legally mandated election ads, which begins 60 days before the general election, will be extended until after the run-off election for the prime minister if there is a run-off.

ברוך דין המות
In deep sorrow we announce the passing of
Harav Hagaon
MESHULAM HALEVI JUNGREIS
one of the outstanding rabbis in the United States, a modest, pious, learned man, who for decades was Rabbi of Cong. Ohr Torah/North Woodmere Jewish Center, and renowned for his work in bringing Jews back to Judaism. Passed away in the United States and was buried in New York.

Heartfelt condolences to his devoted wife
Rebbetzin Esther Jungreis,
president of the Hineni movement.

The Hineni movement in the United States and Israel
המקום יתום אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים ולא תסיפו לדאוג

Bayit Lepletot Orphanage Girls Town Jerusalem Orphanage

The Board of Directors, staff and all the children of our sister projects mourn the great loss of our devoted friend and benefactor

HERB STEIN
of Barstow, Ca.

honorary chairman of American Friends of Bayit Lepletot - Girls Town Jerusalem, California Committee and chairman of the California Child Maintenance Program.

Heartfelt condolences to his beloved wife, Justine, his children, grandchildren, brother Edward Stein and family

On the second *yahrzeit* of
Rabbi JEROME POMERANTZ
we will hold a memorial service on Tuesday,
February 13, 1996 at 3:30 p.m.
at Har Tamir, Givat Shaul, Jerusalem.

The Family

TEL-HAI RODMAN COLLEGE extends sincere condolences to **George Balint and his family** on the passing of his dear wife **IRENE BALINT**

Machon Meir, Jerusalem expresses sincere condolences on the loss of **IRENE BALINT** May her memory be blessed.

Livnot U'lehibanot mourns the passing of **Dr MATTHEW ELLENHORN**
Deepest condolences to Nomi and Avi Davis and the entire Ellenhorn family
המקום יתום אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

Palestinians register claims for Jerusalem property

BILL HUTMAN

PALESTINIAN claims for land and homes in Jerusalem lost in the 1948 War of Independence are being compiled by the Palestinian Authority to use as a bargaining chip in negotiations over the city's future.

The registration of claims began about two weeks ago, according to Khader Shkirat, head of the Jerusalem-based Palestinian Land and Water Establishment for Studies and Legal Services, which is carrying out the work for the PA.

Over 100 claims were registered as of yesterday, Shkirat

said. He estimated the figure would reach over 10,000 when claims of Palestinians living abroad are received.

PA leaders have demanded Israel relinquish land in Jerusalem taken in the Six Day War. They also claim property in Jerusalem that was abandoned by Palestinians in 1948. Last year, Faisal Hussein, the senior PA official in Jerusalem, reiterated this claim for property.

Shkirat said most of the Palestinian claims are in the Baka, Gilo, Beit Safafa, Ma'ha, Abu Tor, and Ein Kerem neighbor-

hoods, plus the areas just outside Jaffa Gate and along Rehov Hanevi'im.

"We are creating a data bank that will be analyzed from the perspective of international law and implications on the peace talks," Shkirat said.

The Land and Water Establishment has run advertisements in Palestinian newspapers here, and in Jordan and the Gulf states, encouraging Palestinians claiming land in Jerusalem to register with the organization.

A well-known Palestinian lawyer in Amman, Mohammed Ayash Mulkham, is aiding the Land and Water Establishment outside Israel and the Palestinian territories, according to Shkirat.

Among the claims registered are for seven properties and homes - three of them on Rehov Hanevi'im - formerly owned by the Nashashibis, one of the most prominent Palestinian families in Jerusalem.

Adli Kleibo, a Palestinian businessman, registered claims to property on Rehov Hanevi'im and two buildings on Rehov Ein

Rogel in Abu Tor. "I have documents showing we owned these properties," Kleibo said.

Kleibo said his family had lost several bids in the courts for the return of the properties, and until now rejected any offers for compensation. However, he added, his family would accept compensation if it was agreed upon in an overall Palestinian-Israeli accord on Jerusalem.

"My father had always hoped that we would get the property back," Kleibo said. "But maybe now we will have to settle for less," he said.

Hussein: There'll be comprehensive peace

STEVE RODAN AMMAN

JORDAN'S King Hussein said last night that he is confident that comprehensive peace will soon arrive in the Middle East. "Our hopes are the same. Our objectives are the same," he said.

Speaking to a delegation of visiting Jewish journalists from around the world, the Jordan king was glowing in his praise of Jordanian-Israeli peace. "There are no more barriers to separate people from each other," he said. "Ours is a real peace, a warm peace. Ours is an example and an inspiration to others."

The king said Jordan shares a sense of urgency to "make up for

all the time lost" and planned quickly implementing all of the agreements signed recently with Israel. "Hopefully, this is the beginning, a real beginning to real cooperation," he said. "We hope that what is achieved will be an example to others. Things are moving in the right direction. People are meeting all the time."

The Jordanian monarch, in a ceremony that was televised on the nation's Arabic newscast, was

presented with two silver doves on a platform, a gift from World Zionist Organization head of information Kobi Leket. The broadcast included the king's hope that the Jewish journalists would return often to Jordan and "keep in touch."

The meeting was attended by Marwan Muasher, Jordan's outgoing ambassador to Israel, who has been appointed information minister in Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti's new cabinet. The 31-member cabinet is being touted as one that will reflect the kingdom's pro-Western orientation.

PA to respond to extradition requests

EVELYN GORDON

THE Palestinian Authority will finally respond to Israel's 14 extradition requests next month, PA Attorney-General Khalid al-Qidrah promised Justice Minister David Liba'i yesterday.

The two were attending the first meeting of the joint Israeli-Palestinian legal committee since it was reconstituted after the PA elections. Liba'i formally resubmitted the 14 extradition requests to the new committee.

Al-Qidrah said the PA wants to honor its obligations, and therefore promised to bring detailed written answers to all 14

requests to the joint committee's next meeting on March 5. Until now, the PA has rejected requests for the murderers of Uri Megidish in March, 1993 and for the murderers of Shlomo Kapah and Gil Revah in August, 1994, and failed to answer the others.

Meanwhile, PA Justice Minister Freih Abu Medein told Liba'i that the PA has already begun work on changing the PLO Covenant. It is not yet clear, however, whether this will be done by amending the original document, or by simply replacing it with a new document, he said.

More than 60,000 flock to Golan Heights for Tu Bishvat planting

DAVID RUDGE

MORE than 60,000 people flocked to the Golan yesterday to participate in Tu Bishvat planting ceremonies and to show solidarity with the campaign to keep the region under Israeli rule.

Leaders from the Likud, Tsomet, the NRP, and the Third Way joined in the tree planting and several later addressed crowds at the main information center in Katzrin. By mid-afternoon, all 30,000 saplings provided for the event had been planted.

"The event far exceeded even our most optimistic expectations," said Marla Van Meter, a campaign activist. That so many people came and demonstrated, by their presence, their resolve to stand by the Golan and our communities is a great source of encouragement for us."

Katzrin Local Council chairman Sammy Bar-Lev said the participants represented a cross section of the Israeli public. "From our point of view the Golan belongs to all and is above politics, and this was proved, once again, by all those who came," he said.

Hundreds of Golan residents acted as guides and accompanied groups of visitors to nine information centers throughout the Golan, giving explanations of the importance of the areas.

Meanwhile, the Golan Residents Committee sent another letter to US Secretary of State Warren Christopher, asking him to meet with their elected representative during his visit.

Hizbullah rocket kills Lebanese civilian in attack on zone

DAVID RUDGE

A SAGGER missile fired by Hizbullah fighters struck a house in Mansouri village, killing Amira Khashab, 22, and wounding her elder sister Mirvat, Lebanese security sources reported yesterday. The village is just north of the security zone in the western sector.

The incident occurred when Hizbullah launched long-range attacks on IDF and South Lebanese Army positions inside the zone.

Another of the anti-tank missiles also went off course and was reported to have hit a house in Shakir al-Hardoun, wounding Ali Alyan.

Hizbullah, in a statement issued in Sidon, claimed responsibility for the attacks on the SLA and IDF positions, but made no mention of the civilian casualties.

Originally, news agencies reporting from Lebanon quoted security sources as saying that the house in Mansouri had been hit by IDF and SLA gunners, responding to the Hizbullah attacks.

UNIFIL officers said that their inquiries into the incident had revealed that the house had not been hit by IDF or SLA fire, but by firing from "armed elements" - an expression used to refer to Hizbullah or Amal gunmen. Amal, however, made no claims of an attack in the area.

The incident aroused widespread anger in Mansouri.

Stabber: Jenin attack inspired me

DAVID RUDGE

THE youth suspected of stabbing and wounding a soldier in Afula on Sunday night allegedly got the idea from a similar incident in the Jenin area last week in which another IDF soldier was killed by a Hamas terrorist.

The suspect was remanded for 10 days by the Tiberias Magistrate's Court yesterday.

The suspect in the Afula attack, a 17-year-old resident of Yamoun village, near Jenin, was caught and arrested immediately after stabbing Warr. Ofc. Eliahu Azulai in the back.

Azulai, 33, a resident of Afula, is recovering from his wounds in

Afula's Ha'emek Hospital.

The suspect, who cannot be named because of his age, told police investigators that he had received the inspiration for the attack from the incident at the Dotan army base last week in which St.-Sgt. Ehuad Tal, 21, of Kibbutz Maoz Haim, was stabbed to death.

Police said he had admitted preparing for the attack, taking a knife from his home and buying a kippa to hide his Arab identity. He traveled to Afula and waited until nightfall for the right opportunity to attack the first soldier he saw.

SUMMONS
To: Wisoot Tengitwatharantun, (Thai passport no. 5039494)
BE ADVISED that there will be a hearing of an application to dissolve your marriage (Case no. 2990/95), submitted by Rivka Buchis, ID 55046147, at the Family Court, 1 Pehay Weizmann, Tel Aviv, before Justice Sirtumman, at 9:00 a.m. on February 28, 1996.
If you do not attend the hearing, the court may hand down a judgment, in your absence.
Zvi Rish, Adv.

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Plan to fight car thefts unveiled

BILL HUTMAN

A COMPREHENSIVE plan to crack down on the "national plague" of car thefts was presented yesterday by the police. The plan was part of a report on the issue prepared along with other government and private bodies dealing with this growing problem.

Internal Security Ministry Director-General Ya'acov Lapidot, who headed the committee that worked three months on the report, told a Jerusalem press conference that if the plan is not implemented, the number of car thefts would continue to rise dramatically.

However, the plan's estimated NIS 100 million price tag left it unclear whether it would be implemented anytime soon.

The report calls for 533 policemen to be hired and added to the 35 policemen who now deal solely with car thefts. It called for 100 supervisors to be added to the team of 10 supervisors in the Transport Ministry dealing with car theft.

It also calls for a three-year ban on the use of car parts from the administered and Palestinian territories, where most of the stolen cars end up.

Car parts would have to be registered to make it easier to determine if they are stolen, and taxes lowered on importing new car parts to make it less attractive to use stolen parts, the committee recommended.

Car owners should be encouraged to use state-of-the-art theft-prevention devices by giving them insurance and tax breaks for purchasing such items, the report says. It also calls for insurance companies and other bodies to form their own quasi-police units to locate stolen cars.

Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal said the government would also demand monetary compensation from the Palestinian Authority if it did not crack down on car thieves in areas under its jurisdiction.

The plan is to be presented to the cabinet on Sunday. The



Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal (center), flanked by Insp.-Gen. Assaf Hefetz (left) and ministry Director-General Ya'acov Lapidot yesterday outline their recommendations on how to fight car theft.

Finance Ministry has already expressed its concern over the high cost. The ministry's committee representative opposed the final report on grounds it did not include a cost-effectiveness analysis.

Two other costly plans presented over the past year by Shahal - a "separation plan" to improve internal security and a new road safety program - were axed largely because they were found to be financially

unsound by the Finance Ministry.

Over 33,000 cars were stolen last year.

Since 1992 the number of car thefts has risen by between 10 and 25 percent annually, with

40,000 cars expected to be stolen this year.

Shahal said that last year alone, car thefts cost the economy some NIS 1 billion, justifying the NIS 100m. investment the crackdown requires.

Explosion injures 10 at Ramat Hovav bromine plant

TEN people were lightly injured yesterday morning in an explosion at a production facility reactor at the Bromine Compounds plant in Ramat Hovav, near Beersheba.

An investigation showed that the 15,000 liter reactor, which held a mixture of methyl chloride and bromine, exploded due to a sudden increase in temperature which increased the pressure inside it.

Bromine is known to be poisonous and corrosive, while methyl chloride is suspected of being carcinogenic. None of the workers was directly injured by the material, because none were near the reactor. The injured were taken to Beersheba's Soroka Hospital, where they were initially hosed down and had their clothes removed.

Three were later released, but Soroka officials said several might be kept for some time to monitor possible side effects. The rest were reported in good to moderate condition after inhaling poisonous gases.

Most of the injured were working in the facility control room, and were exposed to the gases. Environment Ministry and company officials launched an investigation into the explosion shortly after it occurred.

The injured were identified as Michael Abakov, 41, Herzl Nagar, 41, Yehuda Ben-Aharon, 57, Ori Kofefer, 37, Michael Elayev, 47, Shmuel Efrat, 51, Michael Berger, 29, Ze'ev Maimon, 57, Yosef Ben-Hamu, 31, and Ys'acov Alkobi. (Itim)

Wife-abusers to get two more treatment centers

LIAT COLLINS

TWO psychological treatment centers for wife-beaters are to be established in the center of the country. Labor and Social Affairs Minister Ora Namir yesterday told the parliamentary commission of inquiry into the murder of women by their partners.

Namir said there are 15 centers nationwide for the prevention of family violence, which treated 4,123 women last year. There are also nine shelters for battered wives, which helped 472 women and 695 children in 1995.

The minister agreed to a proposal by MK Naomi Chazan (Meretz) to ask the Housing and Construction Ministry for help with mortgages for women in the process of getting divorced. "It would offer an effective and comprehensive solution to the housing problems of female victims of spouse abuse," Chazan said.

Chazan also asked Namir to support legislation to allow a social welfare worker to file a police complaint against an abusive husband, even if the wife refuses to do so. This would enable the removal of violent husbands from the home pending a resolution of the family problem, before irreversible harm may be caused.

Search continues for shooting victim's estranged husband

RAINE MARCUS

DAN region police are still searching for the estranged husband of Orly Koblantz-Noah, a mother of two, who was shot in the head, chest and hand yesterday in the Ramat Hasharon store where she worked.

Taxi driver Herzl-Noah, 45, of Givatayim, is wanted for questioning and detectives are asking anyone knowing of his whereabouts to phone Inspector Yaron London at 03-6104415/62.

Koblantz-Noah, 35, of Givatayim, is still unconscious in

the intensive care unit at Petah Tikva's Rabin Hospital where, after undergoing operations, she was in critical but stable condition.

The shooting occurred at around 4:30 p.m. on Sunday when a man burst into the Ramat Hasharon leather goods store where Orly Noah worked, fired four shots and then escaped on foot. Descriptions given by eyewitnesses match that of Herzl

Noah, said police.

After a preliminary investigation police questioned various people but still have not found Noah, who they suspect was involved in the shooting. The couple had been at odds for some time, said police.

Orly Noah, who left her husband some three months ago with their 16and 11-year-old sons, had filed complaints in the past with police against her husband, who had reportedly threatened her.

High Court asked to order genetic profiles of missing Yemenites

EVELYN GORDON

GENETIC profiles should be made of the skeletons which allegedly belong to the missing Yemenite children, so that their true identities can be determined, a petition to the High Court of Justice demanded yesterday.

The petition was filed by MKs Aryeh Gamliel (Shas), Avigdor Kahalani (Labor), and Tzahi Hanegbi (Likud); Rosh Ha'yair Mayor Yigal Yosef, who chairs the Public Committee for Finding the Missing Yemenite Children; and Shlomo Bahaghi, whose young son disappeared in 1949.

According to the Yemenite community, more than 1,000 children simply disappeared during the early years of the state, when the community first immigrated. The

state says most of missing children died. However, in most cases the parents never saw the body, or received a death certificate. Many of the burial certificates for the children date from the 1990s - 40 years after they allegedly died.

The government established a state commission of inquiry to look into the issue last year. Recently, the petitioners suggested to the commission that a good way of settling the question and for all is to make genetic profiles of all the parents who claim they lost children, of anyone in the proper age range who believes he might have been an adopted Yemenite, and of the skeletons which allegedly

belong to dead Yemenite children. These profiles could then be compared, and it could be definitively determined whether the missing children are dead, or whether they were adopted.

The commission rejected the idea, so the group petitioned the High Court.

The petition said the necessary tests would cost about NIS 300 per person. This is not a large enough sum to justify rejecting the idea, they said, given that the commission's job is to do whatever is needed to arrive at the truth. Only genetic tests will give the Yemenites enough confidence in the commission to enable it to fulfill its mandate of healing this "open wound," it said.

Terror victims ask for same compensation as intifada victims

EVELYN GORDON

AN association of Jewish terror victims yesterday petitioned the High Court of Justice to demand that either Palestinian intifada victims not be compensated by the government, or Jewish terror victims be given equivalent payments.

The petition was filed by a group called the Association for Terror Victims-Afula and the Jezreel and Jordan River valleys, along with its chairman, Meir Elharar, and MK David Mena (Likud). It is based on press reports saying the government has decided on lump-sum payments to Palestinian intifada victims.

The petition charged that there is no legal basis for this decision, and that it stems purely from political considerations. Most legal experts, however, seem to agree that compensation payments are the only way the government might be able to justify its decision to prevent Palestinian intifada victims from suing for compensation in the courts.

Furthermore, the petition charged, this decision discriminates against Jewish terror victims, who do not get lump sum payments. The petition ignores the fact that Jewish victims do get compensation via the Law for Compensating the Victims of Enemy Action, which Palestinian victims do not.

The petition therefore asked that either Jewish victims be given equivalent lump-sum payments, or Arab victims not be given any payments at all. It also asked that the government be ordered to publish its decision on the matter, along with its criteria for receiving the payments.

Netanya chief Rabbi Shloush declines to nominate religious council members

HAIM SHAPIRO

A NEW battle in the war over the makeup of religious councils began this week with a decision by Netanya Chief Rabbi David Shloush not to nominate any members for the local council because they would have to sit with non-Orthodox members.

In a letter to Religious Affairs Minister Shimon Shetreet, which was made public yesterday, Shloush asked Shetreet to disregard a list of nominees which he had sent earlier. According to law, 45 percent of religious council members are nominated by the local council, 45 percent by the minister, and the remainder by the local chief rabbi.

The action by Shloush is the first in keeping with a decision by the Chief Rabbinical Council for local rabbis not to propose names of members for religious councils on which members of the Reform movement serve. In Netanya, the Meretz faction proposed three people, a member of a local Reform synagogue,

a member of a local Masorti (Conservative) synagogue, and a member of the National Religious Party.

In its decisions on the religious councils, the High Court of Justice has ruled that a prospective member cannot be barred because of his or her views. In the absence of a list from the local chief rabbi, the minister may appoint additional candidates.

In reaction, Rabbi Uri Regev, director of the Reform movement's Israel Religious Action Center (RAC), said that the action by the Chief Rabbinical Council and that of Shloush meant that the Chief Rabbinate was withdrawing from official life. In such a case, he said, the RAC would support its right to receive religious services.

In a related development in Kiryat Tivon, Meretz and the local Tal list re-nominated Reform and Masorti candidates for the religious council. The two had been among the petitioners to the High Court.

Namir cites drop in 'depth' of unemployment

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

LABOR and Social Affairs Minister Ora Namir yesterday reported a decrease in the "depth" of unemployment, reflected in the shorter time it now takes to find suitable positions for job seekers.

Namir said this is a result of the improvement in the economy and increased efficiency of the ministry's employment bureaus in

suiting job seekers to available positions.

In 1995 57.3% of the job seekers found work during the first two months of their unemployment, compared to 49.1% in 1993.

In 1993, 4.4% of the job-seekers waited 10 to 12 months until

they found work, while only 2.8% waited so long in 1995.

The number of job-seekers who accumulated one to six days of unemployment until finding a job rose to 37% compared to 28.1% in 1993.

Those who accumulated 181 unemployment days dropped to 4.7% of all the job seekers, compared to 6.1% in 1993.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Burg suggests Negev 'science city'

The idea of setting up a science-based city in the Negev will be explored first-hand today when its initiator, Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg, tours the area. Burg believes it is possible to set up such a city along the lines of Sofia Antipolis in France or Technopolis in Japan. Because of the sparse population, he will suggest that the entire Negev form a "science city" with different specialities in regional centers, his spokesman said. The idea will be raised when the agency's Board of Governors convenes in two weeks. *Batsheva Tsur*

Woman wants to change name to married lover's

The High Court of Justice yesterday heard a petition by a woman who wants to change her last name to that of her live-in lover, even though the man has not yet divorced his wife. The Association for Civil Rights in Israel, representing petitioner Ella Nizari, argued that a previous High Court ruling has already established the right of a woman to take her live-in lover's name. In response, the state noted that this decision - in which the man's previous marriage had already ended - explicitly said the status of a live-in lover is not equivalent to that of a wife. To let the lover take the same name as the wife while the marriage still formally exists blurs this distinction, and essentially allows the man to bypass divorce proceedings, the state argued. *Evelyn Gordon*

Almagor-Ginossar road widened

Construction Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer will officially open the improved Almagor-Ginossar road today. The road was widened at a cost of NIS 7 million. The work was done by the Public Works Authority, in conjunction with the Defense Ministry's settlement department and the Jewish National Fund. *Itim* Teachers institute sanctions today. Members of the Histadrut Teachers Union will report for work at all secondary schools at 10 a.m. today in a protest over pension rights. The pensions of retired teachers have been frozen and members of the Teachers Pension Fund stand to lose up to 50 percent because of a change in the way they are calculated by the fund.

"If no solution is found, our struggle will be broadened to take in the entire educational system," said union head Avraham Ben-Shabbat. *Jerusalem Post Staff*

Cab-driver stabber gets 22 months

Netanel Barak, 22, of Holon was sentenced yesterday to 22 months imprisonment and 18 more months suspended by the Tel Aviv District Court for stabbing a cab driver during an argument. Barak quarreled with the cabbie over driving technique as they were traveling in the same lane in Tel Aviv last September. When they stopped at a light, he got out and stabbed the cabbie through his open window in the face and chest, then pulled him from his cab and continued stabbing him. The court accepted Barak's claim in his own defense that he was under the influence of drugs at the time. *Itim*

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Firefighter Don Lopez of Santa Rosa, Calif. grabs a sapling as he tries to rescue Marglyn Paseka from the rushing waters of Mantanzas Creek on Sunday. Paseka, 15, and a friend tried to get across the creek in a garbage bin. (AP)

Attack on Guatemalan president tightens security for Pope

CONFUSION reigned yesterday in Guatemala after the government said a man tried to kill President Alvaro Arzu on the eve of Pope John Paul's visit but the alleged assailant's father described the incident as a tragic mistake. Pedro Aroldo Zaz Rompich, a 24-year-old Guatemalan, was shot dead by presidential security men after officials said he tried to ram Arzu and his wife with a pickup truck hours before the Pontiff was due to visit the Central American country. The attacker's father, however, said his son was a simple milkman working in the area and was the victim of an accident. Local television reports referred to "an alleged assassination", apparently indicating some doubt about the incident. Security forces nonetheless were on heightened vigilance for the pope's arrival yesterday. Some 4,000 police and security forces will guard Pope John Paul II and the routes he will travel in Guatemala City, said Interior Minister Rodolfo Mendoza. He said the

News agencies GUATEMALA CITY alleged attack on Arzu would not disrupt the visit. One of Arzu's bodyguards shot and killed the 24-year-old Guatemalan man whom they said tried to ram his pickup into the president and his wife, Patricia, as they rode horses in Antigua, 24 km west of the capital. Mendoza said the attacker tried repeatedly to drive his truck into the president and first lady, first striking a bodyguard on horseback and then security vehicles. The bodyguard was treated for a broken arm. When the attacker persisted, he was shot three times and killed instantly, said Mendoza. "We hope this was nothing more than an isolated incident," Mendoza said. The incident came as thousands of police and security forces mobilized across Central America for the pontiff's weeklong tour. He was in Guatemala yesterday and today,

Nicaragua tomorrow, and El Salvador on Thursday, but is to sleep each night in Guatemala City. Mendoza identified the attacker as Zaz Rompich, but said a motive was not immediately known. He said he did not know if the man was armed. Arzu, 49, was elected on Jan. 7 in the nation's third civilian presidential vote since Guatemala's military rule ended in 1985. His campaign pledges included a vow to end violence sweeping Guatemala under democratic rule. A wave of ransom kidnappings, robberies and murders are a fresh scourge on a nation of nearly 11 million that is trying to quell a 35-year civil war. Violence also afflicts El Salvador and Nicaragua, nations that put away their own civil wars at the start of this decade. Authorities in Nicaragua have mobilized thousands of police and soldiers for the pope's arrival tomorrow after an outburst of violence there that included a series of church bombings.

China plays more war games off Taiwanese coast

TAIPEI (AP) - As China reportedly marshaled 400,000 troops for war games off Taiwan, President Lee Teng-hui ridiculed the Beijing government Monday, saying it was "scared to death" of his island's blossoming democracy. Lee spoke shortly after *Sing Tao*, a Hong Kong newspaper, set off fresh jitters in Taiwan by reporting that China will begin monthlong exercises this week along its coast facing Taiwan. "They are scared to death of our historic presidential election," Lee said at a seminar on labor policies, referring to the March 23 poll, the first in which Taiwan will directly elect their president. Lee, who is expected to win the election, said China's actions were "uncalled for," and that "both sides should replace military confrontation with peaceful civilian contacts." Many Taiwanese feel China is hostile to their democratic reforms because they widen the gap between the Chinese and Taiwanese systems, give a free

rein to politicians advocating Taiwanese independence, and make it harder for the two sides to realize their longterm goal of reunification. China claims sovereignty over Taiwan, while Taiwan wants separate-but-equal status. The *Sing Tao* report quoted an unnamed source and could not be independently verified, but was in line with previous such stories in the Hong Kong press, which are seen as China's way of scaring Taiwan away from pursuing separate diplomatic status. The report made Taiwan's main stock index lose 94.22 points, or 1.97 percent, in early trading, but it recovered two-thirds of the loss following a report that inflation was falling. Kung Fan-ting, a military spokesman, urged calm, saying: "Military exercises to soldiers are like examinations to students." Taiwan's Defense Ministry also said it found "no change in Communist military deployment" along China's southeastern coast.

The troop buildup in Fujian Province, about 160 km from the island of Taiwan, is part of the second phase of what is called a "Military Action," *Sing Tao* said. The exercise will be larger in scale and more integrated among army, navy and air forces than the war games of 1995, the Chinese language daily said. More than 20 of China's finest land units will take part, along with more than 300 warplanes, plus submarines, missile boats and attack vessels, the source was quoted as saying. Last summer China test-fired missiles off Taiwanese waters following President Lee's visit to the US. China regards Taiwan as a renegade province whose leaders have no right to make overseas visits. It believes Lee's visit was part of a move to dump the ideology of reunification with China and make the island an independent state. Lee said efforts to raise Taiwan's international profile were "imperative."

More tremors rattle quake-stricken Chinese town

BEIJING (Reuters) - Hundreds of aftershocks yesterday jolted terrified survivors of China's deadliest earthquake in eight years who braved freezing weather in southwestern Lijiang rather than enter damaged homes, officials said. Yunnan provincial officials raced to airlift quilts, tents and medicine to hundreds of thousands of people left homeless by the tremor and to bury bodies and animals to prevent the spread of disease, officials said. "This was the worst earthquake we have suffered," one Lijiang disaster coordination official said. An aftershock measuring 6.0 on the Richter scale rocked the scenic mountain region of Lijiang yesterday just 30 hours after the main tremor with a magnitude of

7.0 hit on Saturday. The main quake killed about 250 people and injured 15,000, 3,800 of them seriously, officials said. At mid-morning, a force-4.8 tremor jolted the district 2,000 km south of Beijing. The region is renowned for its beauty, with ancient ethnic Naxi villages nestled at the foot of snow-capped Jade Dragon Snow Mountain. "It was terrifying," a local official said by telephone. "The earth just shakes and shakes. When will it stop?" More than 312 aftershocks were recorded, causing no new casualties but further damaging buildings. More were expected. More than 186,000 homes collapsed - or 80 percent of the local total - leaving hundreds of thou-

sands homeless. Entire villages were obliterated, officials said, and those whose homes are intact were too frightened to enter. "It doesn't matter whether people still have homes or they don't," one rescue official said. "Everyone is too scared to go inside. Everyone is living in the streets." Another rescue worker reached in Lijiang said a Red Cross of China appeal had triggered an initial inflow of relief aid from Taiwan and Hong Kong but said much more was needed. Rescue teams evacuated 22 foreign tourists stranded at Tiger Leaping Gorge on the Yangtze river. One American man whose name was not immediately known was seriously injured, a provincial official said.

Greek gov't slams door on US envoy

ATHENS (Reuters) - The Greek government, under attack at home for accepting a US-brokered compromise in a recent row with Turkey, slammed the door yesterday on an expected visit by US special envoy Richard Holbrooke next week. "We noted that the program Mr. Holbrooke proposed to us did not coincide with the government's obligations and so the visit is not possible," Simitis said after a Cabinet meeting. "Of course, I want to stress that there will be other contacts between Greece and the United States," he added. President Costis Stephanopoulos is due to visit Washington in May and Simitis said that he too hoped to visit soon. There had been speculation in Athens over the previous days that the government would not want Holbrooke to mediate between NATO allies Greece and Turkey. Officials were angered by Washington's neutrality in a dispute last week in which the two countries nearly went to war over a deserted rock cluster in the eastern Aegean. Intensive mediation by the United States eased the tension last week and military forces withdrew from the area. But Greece and Turkey still claim the islet, which the Greeks call Imia and the Turks call Kardak. Holbrooke, the chief mediator in last week's crisis,

embarrassed the Greek government by saying in interviews that the Greeks had agreed in the deal to take their flag off Imia. The government said it had not been pressed to do so, but the conservative opposition charged Simitis and his Cabinet with "treason" for lowering the national symbol. Instead of seeing Holbrooke, Simitis and Foreign Minister Theodoros Pangalos will fan out across Europe to convince their European Union and NATO allies that Greece's cause is just. Domestic critics of Greece's handling of the rock island row were hard-pressed to decide who deserved more blame: Simitis, Pangalos, Holbrooke or Defense Minister Gerassimos Arsenis. Holbrooke expressed to lead a joint State Department-Pentagon mission to Greece, Turkey and Cyprus in mid-February to try to defuse tensions. He said he would have to give up a tentative plan to try to work out a solution to the Mediterranean neighbors' 22-year dispute over Turkish troops in northern Cyprus. Turkey has recently raised claims to many islets in the Aegean Sea area, where it also questions Greece's present sea and air rights. In addition, Ankara warns of war if Greece, applying an international convention, doubles its territorial waters to 12 miles.

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Chechen protest breaks up after Russian advance

MOSCOW (Reuters) - Russian armored vehicles advanced on a protest by supporters of rebel leader Dzhokhar Dudayev in the Chechen capital Grozny yesterday, but the crowd dispersed without violence, news agencies said.

Itar-Tass news agency said the vehicles had drawn up at an anti-Russian protest meeting outside the presidential palace, once the symbol of rebel resistance but now a burnt-out shell testifying to Moscow's year-long battle with separatists.

But Interfax said later that most protesters, who were demanding the withdrawal of Russian troops from their mostly Moslem region, had dispersed and no shots had been fired.

Russian television showed pictures of protesters massing in the capital in a display of anti-Russian feeling in the mountainous region, where full-scale fighting has stopped but a peace deal struck in July has never held.

The crowds waved green Islamic flags and carried portraits of Dudayev aloft. Some Chechens arrived by bus and truck from other parts of the north Caucasus region.

Pro-Moscow Chechen Security Council adviser Ruslan Tsakayev told Tass he did not exclude the possibility of "armed provocations" against government buildings in Grozny.

The Chechen government could ask Russian forces for help and a

corresponding plan had been worked out, he said.

Tass said rebels armed with mortars had shown up at the government building. No independent confirmation was available.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who sent troops into the southern territory in December 1994, is expected to announce a peace initiative this week to try to end the conflict, in which thousands of people have been killed.

No details have emerged yet about his blueprint, although a senior parliamentary official said last week it would put the accent on finding a peaceful settlement rather than on using military force.

Doku Zavgayev, the pro-Moscow leader in Chechnya, said last week a gradual pull-out of Russian troops could start within two or three weeks.

But the commander of federal forces in the region said on Saturday it was too early to talk about a deadline for the move which, if completed, would leave Zavgayev's armed police to face Dudayev's guerrillas.

Tass said talks were due to resume in eastern Chechnya on the release of 12 Russian police commandos who are still held hostage by Chechen guerrillas following a hostage-seizure across the border in the Dagestan region last month.

Relatives of the policemen had arrived in the settlement of Novogrozny to help negotiate their release, Tass said.



A French firefighter holds three dying seagulls in her arms at Le Touquet beach in northern France yesterday. Thousands of gulls were found dying on the beach, the cause of which is still unknown. (Reuters)

24 die as Colombian airliner crashes in playground

ASUNCION, Paraguay (AP) - Shattering the silence of a mid-summer afternoon, a Colombian cargo plane crashed into a row of houses and a playground, killing 24 people, including seven children playing volleyball.

The plane, en route to Miami via Brazil, had been in the air for barely a minute after taking off from the capital's international airport on Sunday when its left turbine caught fire, sending it out of control, witnesses said.

The crash transformed the sleepy streets of a working class neighborhood into scenes of carnage as mothers desperately searched for their missing children.

People flocked to the scene of the crash, crying and screaming as rescue workers pulled children dead from the debris.

Among those playing volleyball were five brothers whose parents had left them with their grandmother. When the parents returned, all six were dead. "It all happened so quickly," said witness Cesar Rivarola. "I heard an explosion and looked to the sky. The plane was in a spin."

The tragedy occurred in the neighborhood of Juan Sinfoniano Bogarin, four km northwest of the airport and 14 km north of the capital.

The plane's three-person crew and one passenger died in the crash. All were Colombians. The civil aviation office said firefighters found the aircraft's flight recorder in the smoldering debris.

Boy bludgeons, stabs family members to death

VISTA, California (AP) - A teenager told authorities he fatally stabbed and bludgeoned his parents and grandparents and then took his sister shopping for an ax, which he used to kill her, *The San Diego Union-Tribune* reported yesterday.

Joshua Bradley Jenkins, 15, told police he killed the adults on Friday, killed his sister on Saturday and then dragged all five bodies into a bedroom of his grandparents' condominium, sources told the newspaper.

He set at least three fires and fled in his parents silver Mercedes-Benz, police said. The bodies were discovered by firefighters.

The weapons used in the slayings were found in the condominium, Lt. Jerry Lipscomb said. The weapons were not identified. There did not appear to be signs of a struggle.

Police had asked for the public's help in finding the car, which was seen speeding away from the fire. A convenience store clerk called police Sunday after spotting Jenkins filing the tires with air.

NATO unhappy over political foot-dragging by Bosnian factions

KURT SCHORK SARAJEVO

NATO complained yesterday that the Bosnian factions were dragging their feet on some political aspects of the Dayton peace accord but seemed satisfied with the military side.

A spokesman said Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Walker, commander of NATO ground forces in Bosnia, was meeting Bosnian Serb and Moslem-Croat military leaders to assess how well they had met their commitments so far.

Last Saturday - D+45 in NATO parlance - saw the formal transfer of 4,000 sq km of territory between the factions and the deadline for the withdrawal of military forces from five suburbs of Sarajevo the Serbs are surrendering.

"From an initial assessment of the evidence at hand, (there is) substantial compliance with the D+45 requirements," NATO spokesman Lieutenant-Colonel Mark Rayner told a briefing.

But he added: "Outside the context of the military annex, (Walker) is concerned that the parties are showing less encouragement than he would wish to allow civilians full freedom of movement and personal choice."

The only outright area of non-compliance remains the failure of the parties to release all of their prisoners," Rayner said, but noted that this was not NATO's responsibility.

The International Committee of the Red

Cross says the factions are still holding 115 registered prisoners, most of them Serbs in the government prison at Tuzla.

US Secretary of State Warren Christopher was in Bosnia and rump Yugoslavia over the weekend to warn all parties to the Bosnian conflict they risked losing aid and other benefits if they failed to honor all their commitments under Dayton.

The continuing dangers to NATO troops, who dominate the 60,000-strong Dayton Implementation Force, were underlined by two new incidents.

A British soldier suffered cuts to his face when a sniper's bullet shattered his windshield near Sarajevo. "He is fine today," NATO spokesman Rayner said.

The soldier was driving between the Serb-held Sarajevo suburb of Ilidza, scene of about a dozen sniping attacks on NATO forces in the past eight days, and the nearby town of Kiseljak.

In northern Bosnia a US Bradley armored fighting vehicle struck a mine on in northern Bosnia, losing one of its tracks, but there were no casualties.

"This was an area which had been cleared of mines along a track which had been regularly driven over. It is thought that the mine had been placed too deep in the ground to be detected and cleared," Rayner said.

Saturday's deadline, a landmark in the peace deal thrashed out at Dayton, Ohio, in November, has been overshadowed by a row over policing of the five formerly Serb-held Sarajevo suburbs.

International mediator Carl Bildt, keen to stem a flood of Serbs leaving the suburbs, decided to allow Serb police to remain there for another 45 days, until the de facto handover to the Moslem-Croat Federation on March 19.

The Bosnian government objected vociferously. NATO has increased its presence in the suburbs, but Bosnian Prime Minister Hasan Muratovic still demanded that the Serb police be disarmed.

Muratovic and Bildt were both attending the annual World Economic Forum in the Swiss resort of Davos.

Muratovic told a news-conference his battered country needed \$3 billion a year for the next five years to rebuild its economy after the 3-1/2-year war.

"Our country is devastated in a way that practically cannot be described," he said.

Archeologists discover Buddha's birthplace

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP) - Archeologists have uncovered the site where Buddha was born in southwestern Nepal more than 2,600 years ago, the government announced yesterday.

A team of international archeologists has excavated rooms where an Indian prince named Siddhartha was born in 623 BCE. Siddhartha renounced the material world to become a travelling monk, and his disciples founded Buddhism.

The ancient Indian state where Siddhartha is believed to

have been born now straddles southern Nepal and the modern Indian state of Bihar.

Some Indian historians have claimed that the Buddha was probably born in India. But archeologists in Nepal said the excavation in Lumbini, 230 km southwest of the capital, Kathmandu, should end the controversy. There was no independent confirmation of the findings.

Archeologists discovered Buddha's birthplace nine months ago under an ancient

temple honoring Maya Devi, his mother, the government said. The announcement was not made until the studies were complete.

Ancient inscriptions on a pillar above the chambers claimed Buddha was born there. The discovery of the chambers confirmed the ancient claims, said Babu Krishna Rijal, one of the two Nepali archeologists in the team.

The pillar was built by Ashoka, an Indian king who converted from Hinduism to

Buddhism and is believed to have spread the religion to East Asian nations. It stands in gardens that were created around an ancient temple built to mark Buddha's birthplace.

The archeologists who participated in the excavation in Lumbini were from Japan and Nepal, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

The Japanese Buddhists are planning a new Maya Devi temple in Lumbini, and Nepal hopes to make the site an international tourist attraction.

Unrest rocks West Africa

ABIDJAN (Reuters) - Two successful coups and a bloody military revolt over pay have highlighted the fragility of West Africa's multi-party dream, reviving memories of a rash of post independence coups in the 1960s and 1970s.

Diplomats and political analysts blame poverty, lingering civil war in Liberia and Sierra Leone or problems with new democratic institutions. Some even see a link with continuing military rule in regional giant Nigeria.

Whatever the cause, the turbulent start to 1996 is likely to weigh heavily in the minds of politicians and investors alike with elections promised for Benin, Cape Verde, Chad, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Gambia and Ghana among others in the year ahead.

In the last two weeks army officers have seized power in Sierra Leone and Niger and Guinean troops went on a looting spree during a mutiny over pay in which about 40 people died.

"It is a consequence of economic problems and poor management of the transition to democracy," said Abdoulaye Sangare, editor of the Ivorian daily, *Le Jour*.

In Nigeria, the military have been in power for a decade. They

aborted a plan to hand over power to civilians in 1993.

"If democracy had succeeded in Nigeria other countries in the region would have tried to follow," a Western diplomat said. "A country like Niger has very strong cultural and economic ties with neighboring Nigeria," he added.

Countries in the region are pursuing economic restructuring with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Soldiers and civil servants have been hard hit by reforms involving cost-cutting, layoffs of workers and privatization or closure of loss-making state firms.

Unpaid soldiers have tormented governments in the region during the tentative transition to democracy that began in 1990 after the fall of communism.

Civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia have fuelled tensions in Guinea, on top of a refugee crisis and the hardship of its economic adjustment started in 1985.

Guinean troops fight alongside government forces in the Sierra Leone civil war and have been on an African peacekeeping mission in Liberia since 1990.

"Some of the soldiers discover that in monetary terms, the rebels are probably better off," one regional analyst said.

Arctic front hits Florida

TAMPA (Reuters) - The bitterly cold Arctic weather that numbed the eastern two-thirds of the nation headed south to Florida yesterday, leaving orange trees covered with ice and tourists shivering on beaches.

Temperatures fell below freezing in central Florida, damaging some of the state's annual \$1.2 billion citrus crop that remained to be picked. A record low of -7C was reported in Jacksonville and in Florida's north the wind chill took the mercury to -20C in Panama City, forecasters said.

"There is ice in the fruit, defoliation of the trees and damage to new growth," said a spokeswoman for Florida Citrus Mutual. "That means trouble

not only for this year's crop but next year's too."

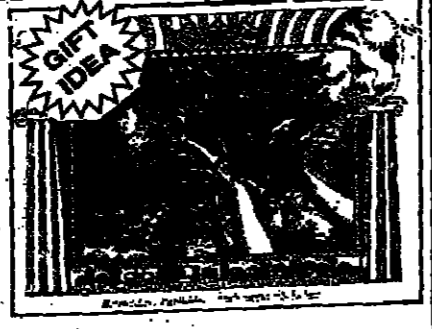
Florida orange, strawberry and vegetable growers who spent the weekend rushing to pick their fruit said it would take several days to determine the amount of damage. Officials said the freeze was not as bad as 1989 when the state's citrus and winter vegetable crops were severely damaged.

Tourists who flocked to Florida to bask in the sun found themselves bundled up in heavy coats, hats and gloves.

"I thought I was coming to sunshine," said Rosalyn Hardy, who was vacationing with a friend near St. Petersburg. "If I had known this was going to happen, I would have taken a trip to the Arctic."

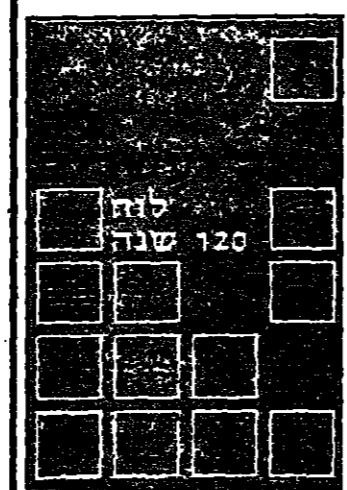
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The Likud-Tsomet alignment

THAT politicians have a penchant for pettiness was displayed in full glory yesterday, when Likud Knesset candidates and other party blue bloods went into a whining fit about the proposed Likud-Tsomet alignment.

For years, leaders of right-of-center parties have dreamed of uniting voters who belong to what is known as "the national camp." If there is one thing clear about the political fortunes of this camp, it is that only in unity can it hope to achieve power and retain it.

It is a fact, too, that in the last election — perhaps the most fateful in Israel's history — more votes were cast for the right-wing than for the left-of-center parties, and that only the right's splintering enabled Labor to win. Yet now, when the first step to unity — in the form of an alliance between the two largest parties on the right — has been taken, fretting, hand-wringing, and personal calculations are the order of the day.

Rationalizing the decision to merge their Knesset lists by citing opinion polls which show a favorable public response to the alignment, the Likud and Tsomet leaders may have contributed to the candidates' self-centered response to the news. Unity needs no excuses. It is

an expression of the truest form of patriotism: the ability to transcend shades of ideological differences and personal jealousies for the sake of the national interest.

Ultimately, there should be only two or three main political blocs. If Minister Yossi Beilin's recommendation is heeded and Meretz joins Labor, and if the religious parties realize their intention to unite, the prospects of a general amalgamation will appear less remote than they seem today. And if the direct election of the prime minister does nothing more than get voters used to the idea of deciding between two alternatives, it will have justified itself. In fact, once large blocs are formed, there will be no need for direct elections for premier.

The Likud-Tsomet alliance was derisively dismissed yesterday by Prime Minister Shimon Peres as lacking direction. That "there is no alternative" has been Labor's battle cry ever since the Oslo agreement was signed. Now that the Oslo route is clearly leading to the establishment of a Palestinian state and the relinquishment of half of Jerusalem and all of the Golan, it is to be hoped that the national camp can offer a real alternative. Voters should have no doubt about what their choices are.

The backwards march

THREE military coups in less than a month have drawn gloomy comments about a "halt in the march to democracy in Africa." One might be forgiven for asking, "What march to democracy?" With the exception of South Africa, a special case in every respect, any such "march" has been backwards. A quick perusal of current affairs magazines specializing in Africa reveals a media segment awash in a sea of wishful thinking, rose-tinted spectacles, economic fatuousness, and public relations froth.

Despite many breathless analyses of Africa resurgent, Africa reborn, and Africa on the brink of boom, the sad image remains of a continent God forgot and man ravaged. Last week *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman used a tour of Africa for a satirical swipe at fundamentalist American politicians. Describing Africa today as "a freshman Republican's paradise" he wrote: "Nobody in Liberia pays taxes, there is no gun control in Angola, there is no minimum wage in Burundi, and there is no welfare as we know it in Rwanda — but a lot of people sure wish there were."

Conakry, the capital of Guinea, lay stripped bare this week after an orgy of looting by the out-of-control military. After the coup in Niger, the new military ruler followed form by declaring he had overthrown the elected president only to save democracy. It is a line borrowed from the brutal demagogue Sani Abacha in Nigeria, whose military repression and hangings of rights activists gained the once proud and cultured country the title of Pariah of the Year for 1995. A bloodless coup in Sierra Leone in January put Brigadier Julius Maada

Bio in shaky power. If this is Africa's march into 1996, one can only shudder at the prospects for its march into the 21st century.

The current crop of upheavals has also put an end to the French myth that Francophone Africa is somehow superior to English- and Portuguese-speaking Africa in its stability. Since France has kept a tighter grip on its former colonies than the other European powers, it is clear that such "stability" has been underpinned by French military muscle and sustained by varying degrees of brutality and corruption from old dictators whose sins are coming home to roost. With France mired in domestic problems of unemployment and budget deficits and awash with North African refugees, there is little stomach left in Paris for costly adventures on behalf of either dictators or fake democrats far away.

Even the best of the Francophones in the regional Conseil d'Entente with Niger — Benin, Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, and Togo — hardly represent a beacon of hope for the shipwrecked continent. Further afield basket cases like Angola, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Somalia represent black holes rather than beacons.

The list can be extended into an appalling catalogue of just how low modern nations can sink when compared with how high they can rise in Europe or the United States. Liberia is especially sad — a state founded by America as a homeland for freed slaves, which has regressed into primitive savagery. Most of its inhabitants can only regret their ancestors did not stay to endure the long march to liberty in the United States, rather than the "march to democracy" in Africa.



At what price, Bibi?

Preparing the new Likud platform, Binyamin Netanyahu shows a new readiness to recognize the Palestinian Authority — if only Arafat can convince him "that he sincerely wants to live in peace with us."

As George Bernard Shaw said, "What you are ready to do, dear Lady, is now known. All that remains to be determined is the price." The Likud seems ready to embrace Oslo. That is now clear. The price? It seems to be a few "confidence-building measures" paid by Arafat.

Netanyahu promises that his new platform will leave no questions unanswered. Here, then, are some of the questions he needs to answer:

● According to the Oslo agreements the IDF is obligated to carry out a second "redeployment" in August-September, which means ceding more land to the PA. Is the Likud ready to accept the implementation of this next stage?

● Israel is committed in principle to allowing the immigration of the "1967 displaced persons" and their offspring (300,000 by our count, more than a million by theirs). Will the Likud send delegates to the quadrilateral commission (Jordan-Egypt-Palestine-Israel) assigned to put this "repatriation" into effect?

● Israel has agreed that "the transfer of the electrical grid in the West Bank" will be decided by "an international arbitration company." Will the Likud submit Israel to such arbitration, certain to hand over to the PLO all "lines, cables, transformers, substations, metering equipment, property" worth hundreds of millions of dollars, invested by Israel?

● In Oslo 2, Israel granted the PA the right to issue visas and "visitor

ELYAKIM HA'ETZNI

permits" for up to one year "for the purpose of study or work." Will the Likud honor these permits, which — with other concessions in this sphere — threaten to create an irreversible demographic imbalance in Western Eretz Israel?

● Israel promised to allow free import of all Palestinian agricultural products, beginning in 1998 (until when they will be smuggled in). Will the Likud leave open

hold on his people's livelihood? ● Israel has pledged to "provide forthwith... all archeological records... including... a detailed list and description of archeological artifacts found since 1967," and to enter negotiations "with due consideration [given] to the Palestinian demand that Israel shall return all archeological artifacts found in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip since 1967." Will the Likud negotiate the delivery of antiquities of Jews in their ancestral land to foreign hands? ● Will the Likud comply with the Oslo 2 provision which confines the IDF to "specified military locations" six months after the establishment of the Palestinian Council — namely this summer?

A new mantra — "Recognize Oslo facts" — is making the rounds in Likud circles. The public has a right to know which of these facts the Likud is ready to recognize.

Regardless of what the Likud says now in pragmatic terms, in the realm of principles and ideological guidelines the damage has already been done, especially among prospective Likud voters. Have you ever seen a person robbed of his house declaring: "This is a fact I must recognize?" Those who genuinely feel this land is their home might well resort to the language of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav, who lived 200 years ago, 100 years before the advent of "political Zionism."

"Though they have stolen the Land of Israel from us/ Which is our land and legacy... /We always pray and cry out/ that it is our legacy... /And ultimately we shall wrest it from their hands, with God's help..."

The writer, a lawyer and former MK, is a resident of Kiryat Arba.

The public needs to know which 'Oslo facts' the Likud is ready to recognize

these floodgates, which virtually ensure the end of most Jewish agriculture?

● Israel has agreed that all tourists to Israel, as well as permanent residents without Israeli citizenship, are to be subjected to the Palestinian criminal law on crossing the Green Line. This includes hundreds of thousands of Jewish tourists and permanent residents. Will the Likud leave them to the mercies of Palestinian justice?

● IN Oslo 2, Israel granted Arafat the sole right to select and send laborers to work in Israel. Those who have aided Israel, branded "collaborators" by the PLO, are being blacklisted, while intifada veterans are rewarded with work in Israel. Will the Likud let Arafat use work in Israel as a strangle-

Paving the way

WALID M. AWAD

THE Israeli government has been pressing President Yasser Arafat and the Palestine National Authority to abrogate the Palestinian National Covenant, or delete clauses in the covenant calling for the destruction of the Jewish state.

The covenant states explicitly that a 70-percent majority is required before any changes can be made in it, either in part or in full.

Since abrogating clauses in the covenant requires convening the Palestine National Council, the only body with the authority to make changes, and in order to enable the PNC to convene for this purpose, it appears that Israel has conceded to let PNC members in the Palestinian diaspora return to their homes in Palestine.

Sheikh Abdul Hamid el-Sayeh, chairman of the Palestine National Council, is due to return to his home in Arab East Jerusalem. Many, if not all PNC members are expected to follow suit.

To the Palestinian leadership

What will the ordinary Palestinian get for revoking the covenant?

and people, it appears that the Israeli government is finally beginning to take steps in the right direction. Many indications point to the fact that all Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails will be released, and that the Labor Party is preparing to end its objection to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

As for Jerusalem, discussions and/or seminars, pre-Oslo style, between Palestinian and Israeli intellectuals are taking place in Europe and elsewhere to explore possible solutions for the seemingly intractable dispute.

Recently, Israel's minister for internal security announced that Israel is considering removing the army checkpoints surrounding Jerusalem which have been in place since prime minister Yitzhak Rabin took office in 1992.

An environment conducive to peace is being created by both parties — Palestinian and Israeli — in order to pave the way for a historic solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict.

PRESIDENT Arafat is serious in his intention to delete the clauses in the Palestinian charter calling for the destruction of the Jewish state, and appears to be mastering all his powers to do that.

He has reiterated it openly on many occasions in public, using the French expression *caduc* to describe the said clauses in the charter as null and void, meaning that they no longer have any significance.

The clauses have also been superseded by decisions explicitly and implicitly taken by two PNC conferences, one held in 1983 and the other in 1991, in which the PNC accepted the principle of a two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, effectively negating the clauses in the charter.

In the 1991 meeting a decision was made to accept American president George Bush's plan to convene the Madrid peace conference.

It was announced recently that the PNC would convene on or around April 12 in order to discuss formally the deletion of the terms calling for Israel's destruction in the covenant. A two-thirds majority is required for the abolition of the covenant, or for deleting the said clauses.

On the public level, it appears that the Palestinian populace inside the Palestinian territories is in favor of changing the covenant to accommodate the new realities on the ground.

However, the ordinary man on the street is demanding to know: What is he to receive in return for formally abolishing the Palestinian covenant?

What about Palestinian self-determination? What about Israel's formal recognition of the Palestinian state with Arab East Jerusalem as its capital? What about removing the illegal Israeli settlements on Palestinian land occupied in 1967? All these are legitimate Palestinian questions which require convincing answers.

Israel's premier must persuade the Palestinian people and its elected representatives of the need to delete the clauses in the covenant. It is not enough to say that the train of peace will stop; a different approach must be adopted. Logical answers addressing the Palestinian people's aspirations must be received.

The writer heads the Palestine Institute of Management.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

EUROPEAN OBSERVERS

Sir, — Reading your editorial of January 26, "The election myth," I got again the impression that you ignore facts which do not fit into your vision of things.

If you had taken the trouble to gather first-hand information directly at the European Electoral Unit, you would not have written, for example, that the European observers "had spent only a few days (mostly in cities, not in the villages)" in the voting areas. This is just not true and I can prove it, at least concerning the Ramallah region. Personally, as a

mid-term observer, I arrived with many other observers on January 2. Together with a Dutch lawyer, fluent in Arabic, my team covered only villages east of Ramallah. I assure you that we both, as all the other observers I could meet, are far from being dreamers like Jimmy Carter, who surely was the person who gave the largest publicity about his observation of the electoral process.

FERNAND HESS,
Honorary Vice-President,
Luxembourg High Court
Jerusalem (Luxembourg).

YOUTH ALIYA

Sir, — Few I think would dispute the wisdom of the decisions taken to slim down the Jewish Agency. As strategic consultants, we have observed the costs in human and other resources of reorganization (and take-overs) both in the public and private sectors. One of the costs is the disruption, demotivation and reduced efficiencies in the often long transition when such reorganizations occur.

We understand that some of the current plans affecting the Jewish Agency include the moving of the unique institution Youth Aliya into

the Ministry of Education. This decision, in the Diaspora at least, is seen as an unexpected and inappropriate one.

An alternative solution based on experiences of reducing the overall weight of government and increasing institutional flexibility in this country (and overseas) has been the creation of freestanding agencies, answerable of course to the Treasury or State Comptroller, but independent in policy making, decision-making and execution.

ANSEL HARRIS
London.

CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

Sir, — In her article of January 17 in *Money Magazine*, "Gone fishing," Jennifer Friedlin explains in great detail the unbelievably cruel circumstances under which the unlucky St. Peter's fish are raised in Kibbutz Yabel.

The poultry say: "Welcome to the club."

"Ms. Friedlin calls this cruelty "Negev 2000 regional development program" and informs us that the motive of the kibbutz is to make "a lot of money." This fortune is to be made by growing fish in hot water and on a diet high in vitamins and

minerals. Three days before killing the fish, they receive their "last supper" and are then starved, in order to "purify" their flesh.

This is called by somebody "technology" and "effectivity." We, the readers call this cruelty. I lost my appetite.

I cannot understand how somebody can be proud of this kind of behavior towards living creatures. Where are all the animal welfare societies? What about the Law for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals? Haifa.

M. SHARON
Jerusalem.

ISRAEL'S ECONOMIC FREEDOM

Sir, — Israel these days has been exuberant about its economic "miracle."

It proudly cites its increase in its gross national product, its GNP per capita and its reduced inflation. Conveniently ignoring its deficit in its trade balance and current account, there is even talk of its being another "economic dragon" like Taiwan, Singapore, Hong Kong and South Korea.

It may be making great strides, but not because of its economic freedom. *The Economist* in its January 13 issue reports on a study of that topic made in a book published on January 12 by 11 economic institutes. It compiled a table which rates 102 countries on their economic freedom. Taken into account are factors which measure the opportunity and incentives to make money. Among these factors are protection of property from invasion by others as long as it does not violate the rights of other people. Failing to protect property rights would be to confiscate it, to require people to give up their time through military service, or to lay down rules for what they may buy or sell and at what price.

Using these criteria of economic freedom Israel ranked 70th out of 102 countries. Numbers 68 and 69 were Malawi and Tunisia. Some of the other countries that are ranked equally with Israel are Sierra Leone, Bulgaria, Turkey, Cameroon, Madagascar, Egypt, Nigeria and Morocco.

If Israel is succeeding, it cannot be because of its economic freedom.

JUSTIN SWEET
Professor of Law
Berkeley, California.
Jerusalem.

The countdown to two months after the Palestinian elections has begun. By then the Palestinian Covenant calling for the destruction of Israel must be revoked. Otherwise, says Prime Minister Peres, the peace train stops.

The issue goes far beyond a few lines in a charter. The way it is exploited may go a long way toward determining the Palestinian future. And in that regard, it might be helpful for the Palestinians to study a little Torah — specifically, the Torah of Israel's less-than-humble beginnings.

Even if we assume the Palestinians' complaints against Israel are legitimate, they do not compare with the Israelites' grievances against Egypt more than 3,500 years ago, when they were enslaved over a period of a few hundred years in exceedingly cruel conditions.

They were beaten, overwhelmed with work loads, and separated from their families. There was a calculated attempt at genocide by a two-pronged strategy in which all newborn males were killed, and the existing male population subjected to concentration-camp conditions.

Whatever complaints the Palestinians have, they do not compare, in pervasiveness or intensity, with these harsh conditions.

LET US examine the Torah narrative on the subjugation and the Exodus. At no time is there mention of vindictive, belligerent action by the Israelites against their Egyptian tormentors. Even when Egypt was vul-

REUVEN P. BULKA

nerable to revenge attacks, there were none.

And on the fateful night before the Exodus, when the Israelites might have been expected to ventilate their great reservoir of hostility against the Egyptians, they were under orders not to leave their homes

It wouldn't hurt the Palestinians to study a little Torah

(Exodus, 12:22).

When Egypt pursued the Israelites in a futile attempt to force them back into slavery, the Israelites, who greatly outnumbered the attacking Egyptians, did not turn on them, but hastened to escape.

Finally, what is there to be found in the Israelite covenant, the Torah, regarding the Egyptians?

Aside from linking a wide array of obligations linked to the Egypt experience, including responsibility to care for the stranger, one of the 613 mitzvot commands us not to abhor an Egyptian, "because you were a stranger in his land" (Deuteronomy, 23:8).

The Israelites were obliged to focus on the positive features of their sojourn in Egypt, on the fact that they, as strangers, were given domicile there.

Were they justified in harboring hatred toward the Egyptians? Without doubt. But

Take the kids a

John W.

Shum...

Paradise...

Take cover, the Bundy kids are here

ALAN ROBERTS

The younger half of American TV's obnoxious Bundy Bunch are in town. The actors who play the maladjusted teenage offspring of parents-from-hell Al and Peg Bundy in *Married... With Children* arrived in Israel yesterday on a publicity tour for the new season of the most popular sitcom in the country.

Bud, played by David Faustino, is a pimply, sex-starved dork. His sex-maniac sister Kelly, played by Christina Applegate, always wears the same tight leotards.

Applegate says she thinks she knows why Israelis like *Married... With Children*.

"It's unflinchingly honest," she says at a joint press conference in Tel Aviv yesterday. "It paints a painfully funny picture of a not so typical middle-class American family, which many viewers can relate to."

"The Bundys really do love each other and always stick together no matter what, even when they have to eat pizza on Thanksgiving, even when they have to resort to prying the crumbs out of the toaster, while a lot of real-life families out there are dysfunctional."

Faustino takes it all a little less seriously.

"There are no moral lessons to be learned from the series," he says, tongue firmly in cheek.

Accompanied on the trip by her real-life mother, Applegate is sporting a henna-colored coiffure that's closer in color to Peg's bouffant than to Kelly's famous blonde locks.

"It's a wig," Applegate explains of her hair color on *Married...*

Her off-the-set hairstyle which, she confesses, she dyed herself, allows her "anonymity."

"Forget what you read in the tabloids," she says when asked if her life is as wild as some published reports would have it. "If you're gonna go off the straight and the narrow, it doesn't matter whether or not you're an actress or an office secretary."

Faustino, too, is accompanied on the trip by his mother. Asked why his real-life father didn't come along, Faustino quips: "I nagged him to come but he preferred to stay behind and spend the week lying on a California beach."

The 21-year-old television star reckons that he constantly reads and studies scripts, "so I don't know if I want a college degree right now."

"For my friends, all college graduates, are unemployed, so no, I won't be going to college just yet," he says.

Ed O'Neill, who plays Al



Christina Applegate (Kelly) and David Faustino (Bud) both arrived for the short publicity tour with their real-life mothers.



Bundy - a loser who sells ladies' shoes, a career he describes as "minimum-wage slow death," and who loves the TV show *Psychodad* - is radically different from his character, Faustino

by a cocker spaniel. "It doesn't look like a Bundy dog," Faustino notes.

The new series will begin broadcasting next Monday evening on the Family Channel.

To the moon, Alice

To millions of television viewers, she was Alice, the long-suffering wife on *The Honeymooners* who stood up to her husband's threats with a sarcastic calm.

Audrey Meadows, the veteran actress who made her mark in the classic 1950s series as the sparring partner to Jackie Gleason's blustery Ralph Kramden, has died of lung cancer in Los Angeles. She was 71.

"I loved that character of Alice," she said in a 1994 interview, "because she was strong and she was tender. She was everything that I think is fine in a woman."

"Why did she stay with Ralph? Because she understood him - and he obviously was thin when she married him."

Although Meadows played other roles on television and Broadway, it was the role of Alice on *The Honeymooners* that made her a pop-culture icon.

"To the moon, Alice!" was Ralph's oft-heard cry, an unfulfilled threat to deliver a shot - "Pow!" - to the kisser.

Alice was unfazed, and many shows ended with a kiss and Ralph's admission, "Baby, you're the greatest."

Meadows provided the perfect counterbalance to Gleason's bus-driver character.

When Ralph unveiled yet another of his harebrained schemes, Alice would stand quietly with raised eyebrows and a skeptical gaze.

Hollywood superwoman Jodie Foster still mom's little girl

Everything has come to a screeching halt for Jodie Foster.

The two-time Academy Award-winner and CEO of a film-production company that commands millions of dollars to make movies of her very own liking, a woman who can produce, direct or act in just about any project she chooses, has been defeated.

And just what has done her in?

A sly piece of technology - a fax machine.

A radiant Foster relaxes in a plush hotel to tout her latest movie, *Home for the Holidays*, which she both directed and co-produced.

At this very moment, however, she's hunched over the obstinate machine.

Foster was trying to fax her Mom two glowing reviews of *Home for the Holidays*. It seems

apt, this sweet gesture that's the adult equivalent of running home with a straight "A" report card. For three decades, Brandy Foster has helped shape and mold her daughter's film career.

And it's apropos of the film, a story about family ties that can sometimes choke but invariably knit its members closer together.

PolyGram, the music and entertainment group has agreed to finance six films at Foster's

the right movies," she says.

In her latest film, Foster presents a stack of issues, including fear of watching parents inch closer toward death and ever-smoldering sibling rivalry.

The ensemble production focuses on Claudia Larson (Holly Hunter) - single mother, museum art restorer, dutiful daughter - whose life is so complex it defies those safe labels.

Through utter obligation, she ventures off to Baltimore to spend Thanksgiving with her parents, Adele (Anne Bancroft) and Henry (Charles Durning).

The Larsons' boisterous and eccentric antics, however, don't resemble anything that's ever taken place at the Foster household, where Foster, 33, was the youngest of four children.

"We're very cool and polite in my family," she says.

Schumann never better than under Horst Stein

Despite uneven material, Horst Stein proved himself a great conductor and interpreter in his debut with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

It's a pity he wasted precious time on a work by the Austrian composer Theodor Berger, called *Chronique Symphonique*, which was composed in 1940 and revised in 1953.

Despite the composer's own definition of the work as contemporary music, it is closer to a film score with simple harmony and banal melody. There are even traces of Viennese waltzes, and pseudo-oriental kitsch. It is brilliantly orchestrated, however, and Stein exploited the possibilities to the fullest, spurring the orchestra on to a display of magnificent fireworks.

Dvorak's magnificent *Biblical Songs* were rendered with so much insight and dedication that one wished there were more than five of them. The magnificent Czech mezzo-soprano Dagmar

CONCERT ROUNDUP

Peckova's dark-colored voice gave the songs a moving, introspective performance.

But the success was no less Stein's. Though he hardly moves his arms, the orchestra seems almost to know his wishes in advance. The way he deals with dynamics and tempi captivates.

No less a pleasure was Schumann's *Symphony No. 2*. Schumann's symphonies pose a very serious hurdle to almost every conductor because, despite the greatness of the music, conveying its message to the audience is extremely difficult. It proved no problem for Stein, however. Though there were a few unresolved rhythmic mishaps, the symphony as a whole emerged as a tightly-knit construction.

Stein also succeeded in producing the special sonority Schumann's orchestration needs in order to become effective. The interpretation which is beautiful and rewarding as any this review-

er has ever heard.

Mann Auditorium, Tel Aviv, February 3.

Benjamin Bar-Am

The peculiar charm of the French baroque, evoked by period instruments baroque flute, baroque oboe and harpsichord was displayed by Kate Clark. Ofer Frenkel and Yocheved Schwarz in little-known gems from the early 18th century in the *Authentica Plus* series.

The subtle art of ornamentation and refined musical taste were demonstrated by Clark's faithful-to-style renditions. Improvised embellishments were placed just where one felt they belonged, in just the right, never overdone dosage.

Her agility in lightly hovering over the instrument's finger-holes in the fast movements, particularly in a highly virtuosic finetune of

THEATER REVIEW

NAOMI DOUDAI

A COMEDY OF ERRORS

By William Shakespeare. Hebrew version. Dan Almagor, Direction. Omri Nitzan, Design. Ruth Dar, Music. Kobi Oz, Lighting. Brian Harris, Movement. Daniela Michaeli, Speech. Noga Yaromi-Raviv, Hebrew title. *Commedia del 16^o Secolo*. Cameri Theater.

Antipholus of Ephesus - Ohad Shahar
Antipholus of Syracuse - Natan Dattner
Dromio of Ephesus - Ya'acov Cohen
Dromio of Syracuse - Rami Baruch Adriaana - Limor Goldstein
Luciana - Osnat Fishman

We can always count on Omri Nitzan to replace timeworn renderings of the Bard with his own original and challenging version. His *Comedy* is no exception to what has become a rule.

This time, in collaboration with Dan Almagor whose witty tampering with the text is cutely contemporary, he produces a version bristling with present day as well as local actualities and allusions. (Dawn Nadel has done a good job too, coping with his updated dialogue insertions for the simultaneous English "translation.")

In our day, it is no big deal to play the *Comedy* in "modern dress" and shift the scene from Ephesus and Syracuse to another eastern Mediterranean port.

Paradise is gained with Mark Morris

With *L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, ed Il Moderato*, Mark Morris blazed on to the stage of the Opera Theater of the Tel Aviv Performing Arts Center on January 31 not as a maverick (as he sometimes seemed in the past) but as a master. The fascinating blend of craft and inspiration he used was original, yet linked with the past; contemporary yet showing ways that modern dance might go.

Morris's *Ballet* (for so it must be named) set to Handel's oratorio and John Milton's immortal poems, combined the bright spirit of folk dance, the sophistication of classicism, with the eerie trick of modernism, and brought them to splendid life. One could exult in this amalgamation.

Here was Milton's "jest and youthful jollity." Here were great sweeping movements of dancers like swifts and startlings in the sky. Here was the twining of strings to match the "light fantastic" and the charm of baroque voices.

And while all this seduction was going on, miraculous stage design (by Adrienne Lobel) in which scrims rose and fell changed vistas of "order, measure, time and place" so that the dancers were seen in "chequer'd shade" or bright sun.

If the second part did not have the same ecstatic moments as the first, there was still the delight of maidens dancing in a ring, and the slap-and-tickle merriment and

'Abbey Road': A great address

NEW RELEASES

TIRZAH AGASSI

"You're asking me will my love grow." That lyric was written by George Harrison, perhaps to his then wife Patti.

The very beginning of that romance can be glimpsed on the video of the 1964 film *A Hard Day's Night*, that has just been rereleased here by NMC. Patti is the blonde schoolgirl on the train.

Having listened to the album and watched the film again in the company of a 15-year-old, I am struck by how little either had aged. Their romantic vision is still just as relevant to a new generation as it was the first time around. Over 30 years after it was filmed, the 15-year-old fell for John in his bathub scene just as surely as everybody else did along the way.

In *The Making of A Hard Day's*

THE BARD TAKEN TO BEIRUT

FOUR singers and a conductor debuted with the Beersheba Sinfonietta in a concert version of Johann Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*, the second production of their "Jewels of the Opera" series.

The gentlemen, lyric tenor Jerry Mellorini (Belgium) and dramatic character tenor Peter Jorgen Schmidt (Germany), a seasoned pro, brought both vocal polish and enthusiasm to their roles. The ladies are recent academy graduates. Coloratura soprano Shirley Hecht sang with a clear and flexible voice, while soprano Larisa Tatev, born in Russia and educated in Tel Aviv brought a forceful quality to an already persuasive stage personality.

Credit for the lively presentation goes to conductor Alexander Levinson (of Riga and Israel), whose flexible musical pacing lent excitement to an off-performed Viennese Opera classic.

Beersheba Conservatory, February 3

Max Stern

TOWER RECORDS' TOP 15				
THIS LAST WEEKS ON WEEK CHARTS		ARTIST	TITLE	
#1	1	5	VARIOUS ARTISTS	RABIN - GOODBYE FRIEND
#2	2	13	MADONNA	SOMETHING TO REMEMBER
#3	4	17	FILM SOUND TRACK	DANGEROUS MINDS
#4	7	13	VANGELIS	VOICES
#5	3	8	YEHUDA POLIKER	THE CHILD IN YOU
#6	14	4	OASIS	MORNING GLORY
#7	12	7	GAZE	BEST OF
#8	9	3	VARIOUS ARTISTS	BEST DISCO IN TOWN
#9	18	5	VARIOUS ARTISTS	BEST OF '95
#10	16	5	FILM SOUND TRACK	WAITING TO EXHALE
#11	17	12	VARIOUS ARTISTS	NOW 32
#12	15	19	ARIKADI DUCHIN	ARIKADI DUCHIN
#13	11	3	VARIOUS ARTISTS	PLATINUS 2
#14	8	9	FILM SOUND TRACK	PRISCILLA
#15	21	4	FRANK SINATRA	LIVE IN CONCERT

Tower Records' top-selling albums for the previous week. RE - re-entry

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1996

Citibank opens representative office here

Frenkel: Move expected to speed up arrival of other foreign banks in Israel

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

CITIBANK'S opening of a representative office in Israel yesterday is expected to speed up the arrival of other foreign banks here, Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel said.

Citibank, a subsidiary of Citicorp, is the largest US bank. Frenkel, at a press conference to announce Citibank's becoming the first major international banking institution to establish a presence here, said the central bank is already aware of other institutions which are considering setting up shop here.

Frenkel, who refused to reveal the institutions' names because they have not yet made a final decision, warmly welcomed Citibank's decision, calling it "a major event."

"It is the first major bank of this size to make this strategic decision, a move which will help Israel in its strategy to incorporate into economies and capital markets worldwide," Frenkel said.

Explaining his bank's decision, Citibank vice chairman William Rhodes said it reflected "a recognition of both the improvement in the macroeconomic conditions and the growing regional stability

and business opportunities unfolding from the peace process."

Citibank said it intends to finance regional development projects, particularly in the energy sector, and participate in the growing trade to and from Israel and the Middle East, using its network of local, regional and global offices.

Citibank-Egypt General Manager Elbardai Ahmed said the bank is in preliminary talks to provide financing for the Alexandria Peace Refinery, the largest Israeli-Arab joint venture to date.

Citibank is also in negotiations to provide financing for a gas supply project, involving establishment of a pipeline through the Sinai desert by which Israel would receive natural gas from Egypt.

Citibank's Tel Aviv office will be managed by Ronny Strauss, who was previously a vice president for Citibank in New York, where he served as group treasurer for the Citibank Private Bank. He is now the bank's country corporate officer for Israel.

Strauss said the representative office will leverage the bank's international network. He said a



Citibank Vice Chairman William Rhodes, Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel, New York Federal Reserve Bank President William McDonough and Prime Minister Shimon Peres celebrate Citibank's arrival here yesterday.

branch may be opened at a later stage.

As a representative office, the bank's activities will be limited to the creation of business connections and opportunities and will not involve any banking or business activity.

Frenkel said he believed Citibank's presence will also bear a positive impact on the local banking sector.

"The Israeli banking system is very sophisticated and has relationships with banks worldwide," Frenkel said. "As more banks of

this kind arrive in Israel, we will become even more sophisticated, competition will increase and the sector will become more efficient."

Citibank currently has offices in 97 countries and territories worldwide.

Kessar: Speed up privatization of El Al

HAIM SHAPIRO

TRANSPORT Minister Yisrael Kessar has rejected recommendations by Treasury officials and called for speeding up the privatization of El Al by putting 20 percent of the company's shares on the market immediately.

Finance Minister Avraham Shohat has yet to take sides on the matter, spokeswoman Elishava Braun yesterday said.

Kessar said this was an opportunity for an initial public offering, considering that American consulting firm Boston Consultants has set the company's worth at \$350 million.

Kessar rejected a recommendation by the Government Companies Authority to sell the airline to a strategic investor, rather than offer its shares in the equity

market here or in New York. Observers said any movement before the elections toward privatization is out of the question.

El Al is a national company and should be sold to the public, rather than an entrepreneur who could treat it as private property, Kessar said. He added that the workers' rights must be protected throughout the privatization.

In a meeting yesterday with El Al chairman Yosef Ciechanover and company director-general Rafi Harlev, Kessar said privatization was a necessary condition for the company's development, especially due to fierce competition between airlines.

Harlev said El Al would show a \$17-million profit for 1995, compared to \$13.5m. for 1994.

Mortgage banks: Refusal to lend in areas apolitical

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

MORTGAGE banks yesterday denied reports that they refuse to lend for housing beyond the Green Line for political reasons, saying such programs depend primarily on the collateral received and how easy it is to realize the property.

Bank Discount Mortgage Bank joint managing director Yossi Shemesh said, however, that granting mortgages in the areas has become more difficult since the implementation of the Oslo accords, mainly because land over the Green Line is not registered as state land.

"We give mortgages as soon as we have adequate collateral," Shemesh said. "If we don't have them, we don't give. This is the situation not only in the territories but also in the moshavim - which have contracts with the Jewish Agency."

Tefahot Israel Mortgage Bank's mortgage division head Yisrael Segal said the bank has not changed its policy regarding the granting of mortgages, but in some places the criteria are stricter than in others because of the risks involved.

Segal emphasized that within the Green Line, the bank also differentiates between areas.

Bank Leumi Mortgage Bank Avital Benesh said mortgages are given based on the bank's appraisal of the value of the property.

"A second-hand apartment that was purchased for \$100,000 over the Green Line may be valued by the bank appraiser at only \$50,000 because of the location and difficulties expected in realizing the property," Benesh said.

Cowan & Co. explores opportunities here

RACHEL NEIMAN

COWAN & Co., one of the top 10 US over-the-counter institutional trading firms and a leading bond broker, has paid a visit here as guests of Dovrat Shrem.

"This is a good opportunity for Cowan & Co to see opportunities in Israel," said chairman Joseph Cohen, who joined the 78-year old firm in 1967.

Cowan ranks among Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley in terms of research staff, with the specialized approach of the leading San Francisco houses.

Cowan concentrates on four industry sectors - technology, healthcare, telecommunications

and entertainment (including gaming and lodging, information and toys).

In the Israeli arena the firm has acted as underwriter for the DSP group and DSP Communications' IPOs in 1994 and 1995.

It also holds business conferences, including an upcoming emerging technology gathering in Cannes where five Israeli companies will be represented.

Cohen declined to name the five Israeli companies but did note that Cowan & Co. has also invested venture capital in start-ups and has overseen mergers and acquisitions.

Central bank to Fishman-Bear Stearns: Change structure if interested in Hapoalim

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

THE Bank of Israel has instructed the Fishman-Bear Stearns consortium to change the structure of the group if it intends to go ahead with plans to purchase a controlling share in Bank Hapoalim, a banking source said yesterday.

The source said the consortium, which is headed by businessman Eliezer Fishman, does not have adequate equity capital to control the bank.

In addition, the central bank is opposed to Fishman's and his subsidiaries' control of more than five percent of Hapoalim's controlling shares.

Fishman and his subsidiaries currently hold 4% of Hapoalim's shares.

Fishman-Bear Stearns are competing against the Claridge-Arison consortium for the purchase of a block of shares, representing 20% of the voting rights and issued share capital of Bank Hapoalim.

The consortium will not be able to go ahead with procedures to purchase the bank unless it has the Bank of Israel's approval.

"The ball is in the hands of Fishman," the source said.

"They know they have to change the structure of the group."

Supervisor of banks Ze'ev Abeles refused to comment on the issue, while Fishman could

not be reached for comment.

The Fishman-Bear Stearns consortium is made up of Fishman, the US investment banking firm Bear Stearns and Reliance, a US insurance group.

Fishman plans to compete for the bank against the Claridge-Arison consortium - which is made up of Ted Arison and Claridge, US investment bank Goldman Sachs and George Soros.

Goldman Sachs and Soros are reportedly on the verge of dropping out of the consortium due to a number of problems connected with Bank Hapoalim's business, primarily the bank's exposure to the kibbutzim - which have had to restructure their debts with government support.

ISRAEL LANDS ADMINISTRATION

To receive recorded information by phone or fax, call:

- 1) Telex 03-6388883, for information on building tenders.
- 2) Telex 03-6388363 for information on results of tenders.
- 3) Telex 03-6388882 for information on documents required (short-term leasing of agricultural land, building additions, transfer of rights, independent construction, etc.)

ISRAEL LANDS ADMINISTRATION **EHUD TOURISM, MANAGEMENT AND ENGINEERING LTD.**
Northern Region

Lease offered on a plot for the construction of a B or C class hotel (4 plots) in Har Hakefitza, Nazareth Tender 14/96/Zadi Peh

The Israel Lands Administration invites bids from those interested in signing a 39-month development agreement, after which those concerned will sign a 49-year lease, with the option of renewing for a further 49 years, for the area, the details of which are as follows:

Participation in the bid is restricted to those obtaining recommendations from the Ministry of Tourism. (The recommendation must relate to the size and location of the area.)

Block	Part of Parcels	Plot	Approx. Area sq.m.	Total Area for Registration (inc. service areas, sq.m.)	Development Costs NIS linked to building index of 11/95	Deposit NIS
18565	1	3	13,400	24,672	5,684,218	750,000
18564	13	11	7,900	14,536	2,403,857	750,000
18565	1	12	10,271	18,999	3,125,318	750,000
18565	1	13	14,538	26,749	4,423,706	750,000

Building rights are according to Urban Building Plan 4070/Gimel.

1. Plot no. 3 is zoned for vacation facilities and a cable car, and is zoned to include a tourist and commercial center, a conference and exhibition center, and sport and leisure facilities, which will serve all the hotels in the complex. Principal area is 160%, of which 120% is zoned for a B or C class hotel, and 40% for a tourist and commercial center. The service areas must not exceed 15% of the principal construction area.
2. Plots no. 11, 12, 13 are designated for a B or C class hotel (split-level), one story to be built above road level, with split level stories built up the slope. Principal area is 160% on each story. The service areas must not exceed 15% of the principal construction area.

In addition to the sum offered for the land, the successful bidder will be required to pay the following:

1. Development costs as listed above, to be paid to the I.L.A. via Ehud Tourism, Management and Engineering Ltd. (henceforth "the company"). These costs are linked to the index of building costs for November 1995, published on December 12, 1995. The successful bidder will be issued a receipt but not a tax invoice and will therefore be unable to claim a tax deduction against this payment.
2. Levies and development fees to the Nazareth Municipality as listed in Appendix Het.

The Israel Lands Administration reserves the right to accept any offer or to reject all offers, including the highest. Bidders are entitled to submit bids for one or more plots, but no bidder will be awarded more than one plot. The tender booklet will be available from February 20, 1996, on submission of a Postal Bank receipt, showing that NIS 500 (including VAT) for each booklet (cash only) has been paid into the Administration's account no. 0-24180-0. The booklet will be available at the offices of the Israel Lands Administration in Nazareth Ilt (Tel. 06-558211), during regular office hours.

A bank check or bank guarantee for the amount shown in the table must be attached to the bid. Last date for submitting requests for recommendations from the Ministry of Tourism is April 22, 1996. Last date for submitting bids is May 22, 1996 (12 noon). A bid not found in the tenders box at the above address at that time, for whatever reason, cannot be considered.

A tour of the site will take place on March 20, 1996, meeting at the entrance to the Nazareth Municipality, Rehov 807 (next to the spring), at 10:00 a.m.

This notice is for information only, and does not obligate the Administration in any way, neither with regard to its contents or the dates mentioned. The binding terms are those given in the tender booklet.

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'Keeping banks open six days while employees working five not feasible'

KEEPING the banks open six days a week while letting employees work a five-day week is not an option, because it would cost the banks an additional NIS 500 million in wages, Supervisor of Banks Ze'ev Abeles told the Knesset Finance Committee yesterday.

Abeles said this would be equivalent to an eight percent increase in wage costs for the banks.

He was responding to MKs' complaints that a five-day banking week would seriously hurt the consumer.

All the MKs agreed that bank employees should not have to work six days a week, so several suggested going down to a five-day work week while keeping the banks open six days.

Hapoalim chairman Emanuel Sharon and Leumi chairman Elitan Raffi added that the estimated cost of such a solution for their banks was NIS 140m. apiece.

Abeles also insisted that all the banks must drop the same day from their schedule.

However, Supervisor of Monopolies Yoram Tarbovich said that in his opinion, it would constitute an agreement in restraint of trade if all the banks sat down and decided on the same day off.

Therefore, he said, any such agreement would require approval from a special court on restrictive business agreements.

According to the banks, getting approval from this court could delay the transition to a five-day week by two or three years.

Currently, most of the banks favor being closed on Friday, but Leumi employees would rather close on Sunday.

Sharon said that even if the banks do close on Fridays, the foreign currency trading rooms would be open, and telephones would be manned, so businesses would not be cut off from the outside world.

For ordinary household consumers, most services are available via the automated teller machines, he said.

Reading between the lines... you have time for trading action until 11 PM.

ISRAEL DISCOUNT BANK

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ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS

Patrah (foreign currency deposit rates) (5.2.96)

Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.375	4.250	4.250
Pound sterling (£100,000)	4.375	4.375	4.250
German mark (DM 200,000)	1.750	1.750	1.600
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.375	0.375	0.250
Yen (10 million yen)			

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (5.2.96)

CURRENCY BASKET	CHECKS AND TRANSFERS		BANKNOTES		Rep.
	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
U.S. dollar	3.2054	3.2820	3.02	3.02	3.2827
German mark	3.1078	3.1881	3.02	3.02	3.1881
French franc	4.7658	4.8227	4.67	4.50	4.7918
Japanese yen (100)	0.0118	0.0217	0.03	0.04	0.0173
Dutch guilder	2.5450	2.5925	2.59	2.54	2.5745
Swiss franc	1.8785	1.9097	1.84	1.84	1.8971
Spanish peseta (100)	2.6722	2.6157	2.63	2.62	2.6222
Swedish krona	0.4455	0.4827	0.45	0.48	0.4489
Norwegian krone	0.4818	0.4894	0.47	0.50	0.4881
Danish krone	0.5441	0.5293	0.52	0.57	0.5484
Finnish mark	0.6827	0.6948	0.67	0.71	0.6900
Canadian dollar	2.2561	2.2925	2.21	2.28	2.2748
Australian dollar	2.5410	2.5783	2.53	2.42	2.5222
S. African rand	0.8920	0.8825	0.77	0.87	0.8988
Belgian franc (10)	1.0225	1.0401	1.00	1.08	1.0390
Austrian schilling (10)	2.9932	3.0415	2.94	3.03	3.0219
Italian lire (1000)	1.9730	2.0049	1.98	2.04	1.9825
Portuguese escudo			0.27	0.28	0.2708
Egyptian pound			0.85	0.88	0.8508
Irish punt	3.8817	3.9240	3.82	3.82	3.8827
ECU	4.9207	4.9825	4.82	5.08	4.9473
Spanish peseta (100)	2.4943	2.5246	2.45	2.57	2.5188

* These rates vary according to bank. ** Bank of Israel.

SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

Key Representative Rates

US dollar NIS 3.1200 -0.20%
Sterling NIS 4.7816 +0.26%
Mark NIS 2.1245 +0.68%

INFLATION MARKETS

New York market indexes

Table with columns: Index Name, Last, Change. Includes DJ Industrial, DJ Transport, NYSE, etc.

Other stock market indexes

Table with columns: Index Name, Last, Change. Includes FTSE 100, Nikkei, etc.

Israeli stocks in NY

Table with columns: Stock Name, Last, Change. Includes Amig, Anap, etc.

NYSE/AMEX

Table with columns: Stock Name, Last, Change. Lists various NYSE and AMEX stocks.

(All listings are closing quotes)
Connstock Trading Ltd. (Date 6-FEB-96)

INFLATION MARKETS

Dollar crossrates (US)

Table with columns: Currency, Last, Change. Includes Pound, DM, etc.

Labor rates

Table with columns: Rate, Last, Change. Lists various labor rates.

(Stock market listings are given approximately 20-30 second time. All others are closing quotes)
Connstock Trading Ltd. (Date 6-FEB-96)

Foreign financial data courtesy of

CommStock Trading Ltd.

Futures, Options, Stocks, Bonds and Mutual Funds
34 Ben Yehuda St.
Jerusalem.
Tel. 02-244963, 03-5758826
Fax: 02-244878

INFLATION MARKETS

US commodities

Table with columns: Commodity, Last, Change. Includes Cocoa, Corn, etc.

London commodities

Table with columns: Commodity, Last, Change. Includes Cocoa, Gold, etc.

Spot metal prices (US)

Table with columns: Metal, Last, Change. Includes Gold, Silver, etc.

New York metal futures

Table with columns: Metal, Last, Change. Includes Gold, Silver, etc.

London metal futures

Table with columns: Metal, Last, Change. Includes Gold, Silver, etc.

TEL AVIV STOCKS

Multi-sided trading

Commercial

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists commercial stocks.

Industrials

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists industrial stocks.

Mortgage Banks & Finance

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists mortgage and finance stocks.

Financial Institutions

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists financial institution stocks.

Insurance

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists insurance stocks.

Trade & Services

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists trade and service stocks.

Property, Building & Agriculture

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists property and agriculture stocks.

PARALLEL LIST

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists parallel listed stocks.

INTERNATIONAL STOCK PRICES

NEW YORK

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists New York international stocks.

London

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists London international stocks.

Frankfurt

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists Frankfurt international stocks.

Paris

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists Paris international stocks.

Tokyo

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists Tokyo international stocks.

Other

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists other international stocks.

Multi-sided trading

Commercial

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists commercial stocks.

Industrials

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists industrial stocks.

Mortgage Banks & Finance

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists mortgage and finance stocks.

Financial Institutions

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PARALLEL LIST

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Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists Paris international stocks.

Tokyo

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists Tokyo international stocks.

Other

Table with columns: Stock Name, Price, Change. Lists other international stocks.

Two-Sided Index decreases 0.56%

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

FELICE MARANZ

Two-Sided Index 210.33 -0.56%
Maof index 219.15 -0.61%

INDEXES fell yesterday as the government tried to decide whether to hold early elections.

Representatives from Labor and Likud met to discuss shifting elections to May from October, Israeli Radio reported.

No decision was reached, the broadcast said. "There are good and bad aspects of early elections," said Dan Kiri, an analyst at Tel Aviv's Bank Otzar HaHayal.

"Investors are waiting for Peres to decide." The Maof Index dropped 0.61 percent to 219.15, and the Two-Sided Index fell 0.56% to 210.33.

Of 999 issues trading across the exchange, three shares fell for every two that rose.

More than NIS 80 million worth of shares traded, NIS 4m. below Sunday's level and about NIS 25m. below the average trading level in January.

Offsetting losses, Maof Index-listed Osem Investment Ltd. rose 5.25% in late trading. Osem was the most active issue on the exchange, with NIS 5.5m. worth of shares changing hands.

Swiss company Nestle was making a bid to raise its 10% stake in Osem, said Kiri. Officials at Nestle declined to comment, while officials at Osem were unavailable.

Among declining shares, Maof Index-listed Dead Sea Bromine Ltd. dropped 3.5%. The chemical maker fell after 10 workers were injured in an explosion at a Dead Sea Bromine factory in Ramat Hovav.

Other declining chemical shares on the Maof Index included Israel Chemicals Ltd., which fell 0.75%. Bromine is a subsidiary of ICL; Dead Sea Works Ltd., another ICL subsidiary fell 2.5%.

Also declining on the Maof Index, Koor Industries Ltd. dropped 0.75%. Koor, which manufactures some 7% of the country's total industrial output, fell as NIS 4.5m. worth of shares changed hands.

Koor subsidiary Tadiran Ltd. dropped 1.75%. Also listed on the Maof Index, Teva Pharmaceuticals Ltd. fell 0.75%. Bezeq dropped 0.5%; Bank Hapoalim fell 2%, and Clal (Israel) Ltd. decreased 0.5%.

Declining shares on the Two-Sided Index included Mofet Israel Technology Fund Ltd., which fell 10%. (Bloomberg)

FTSE Index closes 34.7 points lower

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

LONDON (Reuters) - Weak world bond markets, a sluggish start on Wall Street and a scarcity of corporate data kept many investors on the sidelines and helped push leading UK shares lower, but further losses are seen limited near-term.

The FTSE Index closed 34.7 points lower at 3,746.6. The FTSE 100 closed 34.7 points lower at 3,746.6. The FTSE 250 closed 34.7 points lower at 3,746.6.

FRANKFURT - The bourse ended sharply down on the day, in line with a weak dollar and tumbling German government bonds, or Bunds. At closing the blue-chip DAX Index was down 33.05 points at 2,419.01 points.

The IBIS DAX dipped to a low of 2,408.89 in the post-bourse electronic session, but pulled back up as Bunds pared their losses to close at 2,416.84 points.

PARIS - Profit-taking took a big bite out of French shares, which finished with steep losses below 2,000.

Traders said the correction in prices after last week's rally was given further impetus by the lower tone on Wall Street and in bond markets. The franc also weakened against the mark.

The CAC-40 index closed down 36.62, or 1.81 percent, at 1,985.59.

ZURICH - Shares lost almost 1.5% in quiet trade, pushed lower by rising interest rates, lower bond futures and an easier dollar. However, downward pressure seemed to be limited and a recovery could be expected later in the week.

The broad SPI index fell 22.62 points to 2,114.57, four points above day's low.

TOKYO - Shares ended lower as the market consolidated last week's gains, which had briefly pushed the Nikkei above 21,000. Sporadic arbitrage-linked selling led by weak futures pushed down the market, but underlying sentiment remained strong.

The 225-share Nikkei average closed down 250.65 points, or 1.20%, to 20,653.38, after hitting a low of 20,623.88.

HONG KONG - Stocks closed a day of directionless trading slightly higher on continued rotational buying of utilities and other laggards.

The blue-chip Hang Seng Index gained 14.72 points to 11,484.12, off an early high of 11,521.06. Turnover dipped to HK\$8.94 billion from Friday's adjusted HK\$9.57b.

SYDNEY - The share market ended lower amid profit-taking as futures fell away and even the gold sector failed to hold its ground. The All Ordinaries index closed 21.5 points lower at 2,271.7.

Brokers said profit-taking had been the order of the day in the absence of positive leads for the industrials and non-gold resource stocks and with the gold price failing to make further significant advances.

JOHANNESBURG - Shares ended a sluggish day softer, with industrials dampened by a weaker bond market and golds weak on a softer bullion price. Traders said the market was relaxing from Friday's hectic trade and once it settled buying would return.

The all-share index was down 46.8 points to 9,946.7, the industrial index lost 63 points to 8,542.5 and the gold index slipped 24.5 points to 1,878.7.

Late rally sends blue chips to yet another record high

WALL STREET REPORT

NEW YORK (Reuters) - The Dow Jones industrial average closed at a new high yesterday after renewed strength in technology shares pulled the blue-chip market out of a decline of more than 20 points.

Based on early and unofficial data, the Dow index ended up 33.60 points at 5,407.59, beating the old record of 5,405.06 set Thursday. In the broader market, advancing issues led declines by a small margin on moderate volume of 380 million shares on the New York Stock Exchange.

CURRENCY CROSS-RATES

Table with columns: MARK, STERLING, YEN, SFR, FFF. Lists currency cross-rates.

Hap. TA surges past Mac. Rishon Lezion

Hapoel Tel Aviv scored an upset over Maccabi Rishon Lezion, beating the visitors 95-84 in the National Basketball League's sole contest last night.

Hapoel played a very balanced and team-oriented game, making it hard to believe this was the same club that started the evening with a 3-9 record.

Hapoel held a 49-44 lead at the half, despite a 19-point effort by James Gully in the period and a Maccabi domination of the offensive boards.

In the second half, the Tel

RICHARD ZAACKS

Avivians pulled away after a slow start out of the locker room and held a comfortable margin for most of the period.

Hapoel head coach Moshe Weinkrantz gained a measure of revenge with the victory, after resigning as Maccabi's coach earlier this season over a disagreement with management.

Nanad Markovich paced Hapoel with 27 points, while Meir Tapiro scored 26, Andre Spencer 21 and Lazy Gordon 12.

For Maccabi, which suffered a blow to its quest to reach the Final Four, Gully had 29 points and Brian Oliver 25.

National Basketball League

Team	W	L	Pts
Hapoel Jerusalem	12	1	25
Maccabi Tel Aviv	12	1	25
Hapoel Galil Elyon	9	4	22
Bnei Herzliya	9	4	22
Maccabi Rishon	8	5	21
Hapoel Saffed	7	6	20
Hapoel Holon	5	8	18
Hapoel Ellat	4	9	17
Maccabi Jerusalem	4	9	17
Hapoel Tel Aviv	4	9	17
Hapoel Gvat	2	11	15
Maccabi Ramat Gan	2	11	15

Massachusetts nearly upset

CINCINNATI (AP) - The masters of great escapes had to pull off their best yet to remain unbeaten.

Top-ranked Massachusetts was outplayed for virtually the entire game by underdog Xavier of Ohio on Sunday, but found a way to remain the only undefeated Division I team. UMass pulled away in the closing seconds of overtime for a 78-74 victory that

kept its record perfect at 21-0.

It was harrowing and humbling, but it was typical UMass. The Minutemen have gone overtime in three of their last nine games, and have won their last 10 overtime games dating to late in the 1990-91 season.

"Massachusetts made the plays down the stretch that they've made consistently throughout the

year in games of this ilk," Xavier coach Skip Prosser said.

Everybody is shooting to be the first to knock them off, but the Minutemen keep hanging on by hanging tough at the end.

SUNDAY'S TOP 25 RESULTS:
No. 3 Kansas 72, Kansas State 62; No. 5 Cincinnati 79, South Florida 69; No. 18 Syracuse 81, Alabama 68; and Mississippi State 78, No. 22 Auburn 75.

Magnes Race on for tomorrow

THE Givat Ram campus of the Hebrew University will host tomorrow's Magnes Race, Israel's oldest race, now in its 45th year.

The popular Magnes Race (2:45 pm) will cover a distance of 2300 meters while the sixth Frankel Race (2 pm) will be run over 5000m.

Among the entries are Etty Kirma, from ASA Jerusalem, who finished third among the women at the last Tiberias

HEATHER CHAIT

Marathon and who will be seeking her fourth successive title, as well as Yosef Rvia who won the Jerusalem Marathon in the 19 years category with 70-year-old Moshe Gur at the other end of the scale.

The Frankel Race will also include the following categories: youth until 18, men over 40, women over 35 and a walking race for which 20 people from a

Jerusalem old age home have already entered.

The race, organized by the Cosell Center and Jerusalem Municipality's Sports Authority, honors Judah L. Magnes, the Hebrew University's first president and Walter Frankel, a major contributor to Israeli running who was also The Jerusalem Post's gardening columnist.

This year the race forms part of Jerusalem's 3000 festivities. To register, call (02) 882-811/2.

Millwall's McCarthy takes Ireland's helm

LONDON (Reuter) - Mick McCarthy is taking over as Ireland manager, his English First Division club Millwall said yesterday.

McCarthy was due hold holding a news conference in Dublin later yesterday.

Millwall chairman Peter Mead told reporters: "I am naturally very pleased for Mick and it is a great compliment to Millwall Football Club.

"On a personal note I am sad that I am losing a manager whom I admire enormously and a friend.

"He brings to his new job great

qualities, particularly in the area of decency and integrity. We will miss him," Mead added.

McCarthy became the clear favorite to replace Jack Charlton, who retired after Ireland failed to reach the European Championship finals in December, once Wimbledon's Joe Kinnear ruled himself out of the running.

McCarthy was recommended to the Football Association of Ireland by Charlton. Like Charlton, McCarthy was born in England. His father, Charles, settled in Barnsley after emigrating from Waterford.

Spiegler ousted from Zafrim Holon

ORI LEWIS

JUST one day after the sacking of Betar Tel Aviv coach Michael Kadosh, Mordechai Spiegler became the ninth coach this season to join the ranks of the dismissed in the National League.

Spiegler had very little success with Zafrim Holon, managing only three wins, three draws and 11 defeats this season. Their 15th place in the league is only better than Betar Tel Aviv's, and even then, only on goal difference.

Neither Holon nor Spiegler would reveal the circumstances of the latter's termination of contract yesterday, preferring just to state that they had "parted company on good terms."

Spiegler's demise was mooted since last Friday's 1-0 league defeat at the hands of another lowly club, Maccabi Jaffa.

Although at the time, both club patron Stern Haluba and Spiegler himself said no immediate decisions would be taken, yesterday the decision was made to implement a change.

Eli Cohen, Spiegler's assistant will remain in charge until a replacement is named.



ON THE REBOUND - Jennifer Capriati, seen here in the 1990 Paris Open semifinals, has been granted a wild card placement for this year's tournament which begins next week. At 14, she was the youngest Paris Open semifinalist.

Capriati to make comeback bid at Paris Open

PARIS (AP) - Jennifer Capriati, hoping to put off-the-court problems behind her, will make her first tournament appearance since November 1994 at next week's Paris Open.

Organizers said yesterday that Capriati was granted a wild card for the February 13-18 event.

Capriati, 19, left the tour after losing in the first round of the US Open in 1993 and returned to high school. She later dropped out, and then was arrested in the spring of 1994 on marijuana possession charges.

A teen-ager arrested with her claimed Capriati also had been using heroin. Capriati never denied the allegation.

Capriati went for treatment in two drug rehabilitation clinics, then attempted a comeback at a tournament in Philadelphia in November 1994. She lost in

the first round to Anke Huber and has not played since.

"She feels ready physically and mentally after a long period of preparation in Florida," Paris Open organizers said in a statement.

Huber and former Australian Open champion Mary Pierce are the top entries in the Paris tournament. The 28-player field also includes Iva Majoli, Jana Novotna and Martina Hingis.

Steffi Graf was originally seeded No. 1, but withdrew last week because she is still recovering from foot surgery.

Capriati beat Graf to win the Olympic gold medal at the 1992 Barcelona Games. She was ranked No. 6 in the world in 1993, and reached the semifinals at the French Open in 1990, and Wimbledon and the US Open in 1991.

Seahawks caught in a tug-of-war

SEATTLE (AP) - While the Seahawks logo appears to be headed for the sports memorabilia graveyard, Seattle officials say they hope to find a local buyer and give the frowning, sharp-beaked bird a new lease on life.

Owner Ken Behring says he is in Southern California to stay, but King County Executive Gary Locke confirmed late Sunday that Behring representatives were talking with those of a prospective buyer.

"The question remains whether he wants to sell," Locke said.

"I think that when we succeed in court in forcing the team to stay here, he may have more incentive to sell the team." The county filed suit last week.

While the mayor of Anaheim was prepared to announce plans that would provide the Seahawks with a training site at Rams Park, a moving van showed up at team headquarters in suburban Kirkland and workers loaded it with exercise equipment.

Behring told The Los Angeles Times from his Danville, California, land developing offices on Saturday, "I'm committed to Los Angeles." He said his team will be moving to Rams Park "very soon."

"I'm a Californian and this is where I want to be," Behring said.

Anaheim spokesman Bret Colson said the city "expects to have an agreement reached with the new Southern California football franchise to train at what was once known as Rams Park this week."

"It is not the city's policy to conduct negotiations in the public arena, so there will be no blow-by-blow description of talks between the city and Mr. Behring," Colson said.

Locke said price and terms were questions to be answered, but that Behring had indicated he wouldn't close the door to an offer. He also said he hoped other prospective local owners would surface.

Anaheim mayor Tom Daly said Saturday night he hoped an agreement would be reached soon.

The Seahawks came into the league in 1976. Behring bought the franchise in 1988 for \$80 million and \$19m in existing debt. He now estimated to be worth between \$160m and \$200m, including \$40m of debt.

Behring still has 10 years left on his lease to play in the Kingdome. The lease that the Seahawks are playing under was signed by the Nordstrom family before it sold the franchise to Behring.

Behring contends the lease is no longer binding because it is supposed to guarantee the team a "first-class facility."

King County, owner and operator of the Kingdome, is suing Behring to keep the team from moving as the Raiders and Rams did from Los Angeles in 1995.

Youngster wins big at Caesarea

JULES CUBURNEK

AT the Caesarea Golf Club in the monthly medal competition divided into four divisions.

Fourteen-year-old David Adelman won Division A with a 74 net. Second was Barry Zimmerman with 76, and Shuki Tzadikian came in third with a 77.

Better golf was played in Division B where Mike Bannister led with 70 strokes followed by Chuck Shaikowitz with 71 and Judy Reeve with a par 73. Hanan Eshed was first in Division C at 71 net, Joe Klein had 73 and John Gainsford 74. In Division D, Meir Iny was first at 74, Nate Kansky next with 75 and Reuben Chakin third with 76.

After the third round of the national Coca Cola Golf League, Tel Aviv and Ramat Hasharon are tied with eight points each, followed by Caesarea with 7.

qualities, particularly in the area of decency and integrity. We will miss him," Mead added.

McCarthy became the clear favorite to replace Jack Charlton, who retired after Ireland failed to reach the European Championship finals in December, once Wimbledon's Joe Kinnear ruled himself out of the running.

McCarthy was recommended to the Football Association of Ireland by Charlton. Like Charlton, McCarthy was born in England. His father, Charles, settled in Barnsley after emigrating from Waterford.

Too much chatter nearly ruins the NBA Magic

SPORTSWATCH
ARYEH DEAN COHEN

NOT EVEN Channel 33's five-headed broadcasting team - Arik Hoenig and Moni Moshanov in Orlando and Uri Levy, Ron Kaufman and Matti Golan in Jerusalem - could ruin Sunday night's Magic overtime victory over the Spurs, but they sure tried.

Unfortunately, the overtime just gave the quintet - especially Hoenig - that much more time to chime in with mostly superfluous comments. We've complained about it before, but apparently no one at Channel 5 or 33 is listening: too much talk spoils the broadcast.

We jotted down just a few of the inaccuracies and wasted words accompanying what was otherwise an exciting game, and quickly filled up two pages. But forget about the fact that Kaufman said Horace Grant was still out and Grant ended up being one of the stars of the game, or that someone mentioned that Doc Rivers was out with an injury, and Rivers also played. After all, even NBC's Bill Walton screwed up when he referred to Will Perdue as "the big guy just acquired from the Bulls." Try in the pre-season, Bill.

What was more annoying than those minor flubs was the ridiculous switching back and forth between the studio and Orlando, just so Hoenig could restate the obvious. Yes, Hoenig got Israel on the NBA-broadcast map, but that doesn't mean he has to hog the mike.

The first attempt to make contact with Hoenig and Moshanov was downright hysterical. Levy was talking to his guests when to his and our surprise, Hoenig suddenly came crackling over the air from Orlando. NBC then ran an interview with Grant, while Channel 33 desperately tried to go to Hoenig. "First let's hear from Horace Grant, then we'll come back to you," suggested Levy.

who deserves credit for his patience. "Listen to who? Oh - Horace Grant. Okay," responded Hoenig, but by then the Grant interview was over. When Hoenig finally got to tell us what was so important, it turned out to be information we already knew from the NBC stats or from the in-studio discussion.

The Moshanov gags - which both channels are beating to death - again were pretty flat. After all, how many jokes about the diminutive Moshanov and the huge NBA players can you take? And we really didn't need Levy telling Moshanov about the game that the All-Star game he's to attend had been cancelled, with Hoenig responding: "They wanted to cancel it, but when they heard Moni was coming, they decided not to." Pathetic, guys.

Kaufman, on the other hand, improved as the game went on, particularly when he suggested that Magic Johnson's return was aimed primarily at selling out the Forum. His stat noting that no San Antonio player had fouled out so far this season was also interesting.

Fortunately, Channel 33 didn't cut Bob Costas's interview with Magic, but veteran economic journalist Golan - who currently anchors a Channel 33 economic program, writes a column in *Globes* and likes the Celtics which apparently made him a perfect choice for fifth man in the studio - was way out of line with his remark that "if you're not Magic and you're HIV positive, your life is much more difficult." Golan also provided the following analysis: "The game will be won by the team which loses less balls and misses fewer shots." Like, duh, Matti.

Mercifully, there were enough moments of pure silence from the Channel 33 quintet to allow us to actually enjoy the game. Someone should remind Hoenig and the other local NBA "experts" that silence is golden, while useless chatter goes over like a lead balloon.

SPEAKING of silence, the silent treatment Maccabi Coach Zvi Scherf and the rest of the players gave us immediately after Thursday night's loss to Bologna was inexcusable. Not facing the mikes immediately after the game was something Levy and sideline Moshe Gertel should never have tolerated. We were assured Scherf and company would comment on the loss during the 11:30 late news, but the lack of class displayed by ducking the post-game interview left us with absolutely no interest in tuning in again an hour later.

WORSE than verbose commentators are listings which leave viewers in the lurch. Lastly, *Point Plus* has been way off on sports programming, meaning either they're not bothering to print updated schedules, or the stations involved - in this case Superchannel and SportsChannel - just aren't bothering to keep them updated.

NBA Action, originally listed for Sunday night at 7:15, wasn't shown at that hour, and when we switched on Superchannel Sunday night for what was listed as a Major League Baseball Players softball all-star game, we were "treated" to the Buckler Christmas Basketball Challenge, another Superchannel sports reread. Local and foreign stations should make a better effort to keep viewers updated about what's really going to be on: otherwise they'll find their channel surfing towards friendlier television shores.

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'No Israeli troops helped Eritrea'

BATSHEVA TSUR

ERITREA was not aided by Israeli troops in its Red Sea dispute with Yemen, Eritrean President Isias Afwerke said yesterday.

He was speaking during a three-hour visit to Israel during which he met with President Ezer Weizman, Prime Minister Shimon Peres, and Health Minister Efraim Sneh.

Afwerke, accompanied by his country's ministers of foreign affairs and trade, stressed that Eritrea preferred to settle its dispute with Yemen through international arbitration, and would not accept the assistance of foreign troops. Israel, he said, was used as a scapegoat in the region, and the rumors in the Arabic-language media were unfounded. At the same time, he noted that Eritrea has inherited an arsenal large

enough for four or five countries and has wide military experience.

He and Peres agreed to strengthen cooperation and signed a number of agreements, notably in the fields of medicine and agriculture.

Israel last year began setting up a pilot program for the settlement of demobilized Eritrean soldiers who wish to engage in agriculture. Sneh, who visited Eritrea six months ago, said that six health-related projects are underway, including the building of a 200-bed hospital and the operation of an intensive care unit in Asmara by Israeli experts.

Afwerke, who flew here in an Israeli plane, arrived late due to a technical problem with the aircraft. From here, he went on to Rome.



US Secretary of State Warren Christopher (right) and James Fry plant a tree yesterday at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem in honor of Fry's father, Varian, the only US citizen to be named a Righteous Gentile for saving Jewish lives during the Holocaust. (Isaac Harari)

Namir to reform system of protection for children in distress

MICHAL YUDELMAN

LABOR and Social Affairs Minister Ora Namir yesterday decided on a major reform of the system for treatment and protection of children in distress or in danger of abuse or neglect.

She adopted the recommendations of the committee, headed by Prof. Dan Shnit of Tel Aviv University, appointed some three months ago to examine the system for protection of children at risk.

Thousands, probably tens of thousands, of children and youth are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, criminal neglect, drugs, and other sorts of abuse. Since the introduction of legislation obliging the report of child abuse or neglect, reported incidents have risen drastically.

Moreover, frequent reports of abused children whom the authorities failed to help, as well as cases of children unjustly taken from their parents by welfare workers, have aroused public anger at the ministry and social workers.

The committee found the protection system sorely lacking. Inadequate facilities, meager resources, and splitting the services among several ministries prevent dealing with the problem adequately, the report concluded.

It recommended finding immediate solutions to protect children at risk, and providing social workers with the necessary

resources and equipment to do so. These include operating a national emergency center for receiving and handling reports of child abuse or neglect 24 hours a day, and equipping social workers in charge children with beepers and cellular telephones to enable immediate response.

The committee also recommends setting up a new department which will be in charge of all the child protection services and coordinate among the Health, Education, Internal Security, and Labor and Social Affairs ministries.

Another recommendation concerns splitting the adoption services into a unit to treat adopted children, and another to handle adopting families, to prevent a conflict of interests between the needs of a child and its biological parents on the one hand, and the desires of the adopting families on the other.

Namir also adopted the recommendation to treat children at risk within their community and family, and only in extreme cases to approve their separation from their parents.

However, committee member Dr. Yitzhak Kadman, chairman of the Council for the Child, criticized the committee's report, which he called minimalistic and missing an opportunity for a real reform.

Only US Righteous Gentile honored

BATSHEVA TSUR

THE only US citizen to be recognized as a Righteous Gentile, Varian Fry, was honored yesterday at a ceremony at Yad Vashem attended by US Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Fry's son, James. Varian Fry was recognized as a Righteous Gentile two years ago.

Christopher and James Fry, a professor of biology in Sweden, planted a tree in the Avenue of the Righteous of the Nations and then sampled dried fruits and nuts to mark Tu B'Shvat. Fry

accepted a posthumous medal and certificate on behalf of his father.

The elder Fry, who died in Connecticut in 1967 at the age of 59, had been a volunteer with the Emergency Rescue Commission under the patronage of then-US first lady Eleanor Roosevelt. The committee had the power to grant some 200 exit permits for persons persecuted by the Vichy government in France.

Fry arrived at the commission's office in Marseilles in 1940 for a three-month stint as a volunteer. There he found himself besieged by thousands of victims of the regime's persecution. The three months turned into 13 as Fry, unable to bear the human suffering and at great personal risk, decided to forge documents that would take more people to freedom.

His office was ransacked by the

authorities and he was twice jailed, but he eventually managed to save the lives of some 4,000 persons, most of them Jews.

By September 1941, even the US diplomats were looking askance at Fry's illegal activities and he was finally expelled from France.

Among the best known of the persons whose lives Fry saved were artist Marc Chagall, sculptor Jacques Lifschitz, and philosopher Hannah Arendt.

Blood donations drop significantly

JUDY SIEGEL

MAGEN David Adom is considering a publicity campaign to encourage people to give blood, as the Ethiopian immigrant blood affair has caused a significant drop in donations.

MDA director-general Amos Luria said yesterday that immediately after the story about the dumping of immigrant blood due to the high risk of HIV was published nearly two weeks ago, blood donations actually increased. But since then, they have fallen significantly.

"We hope the public will realize that everything we have done was to ensure its health," Luria said. "It would be unfortunate if the supply of blood - already at the red line before the affair - were to be so inadequate that operations and treatments at hospitals have to be postponed and cut back."

Luria said putting blood services

director Dr. Amnon Ben-David on paid leave until the Navon Commission investigating the matter reaches its conclusions, as he had recommended to the MDA board on Sunday, would have cooled down the situation.

On Sunday night, the Tel Aviv district labor court issued a temporary restraining order barring any change in Ben-David's status. The case is expected to be heard in about two weeks.

The Health Ministry yesterday dismissed the revelation that in 1984, Dr. Moshe Mashiah - then head of hospitalization services, subsequently ministry director-general, and now director-general of Wolfson Hospital in Holon - issued instructions to all hospitals and blood banks that blood donated by Ethiopian immigrants must be

specially marked with the words "Ethiopian immigrant." This was due to the high risk of hepatitis B in their blood; AIDS was then almost non-existent in immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa.

Ministry spokeswoman Yifat Ben-Hai said the ministry has searched its files to see if there had been any policy documents regarding Ethiopian immigrants. The Mashiah letter was the only one they found, she said.

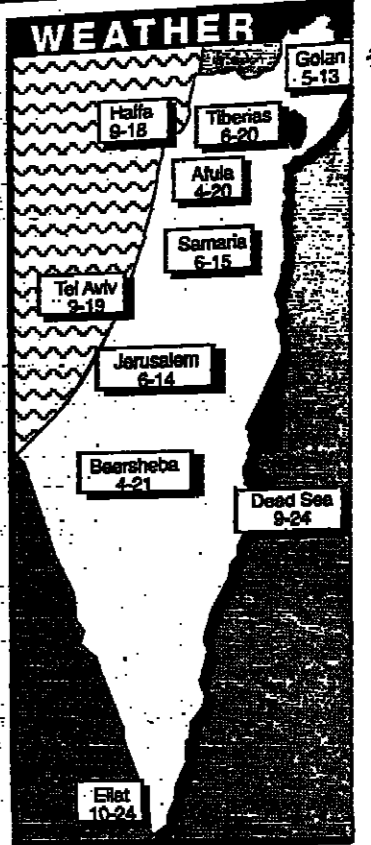
Ben-Hai added that Ronel Fisher, the *Ma'ariv* reporter who disclosed the policy of dumping the blood without informing the immigrants, had spoken to Sneh and to Absorption Minister Yair Tzaban before publication. They begged him not to publish the story, saying it would cause incalculable harm to the immigrants, but he refused their request, Ben-Hai said.

Shamgar panel completing its inquiry today

BILL HUTMAN

OUTGOING General Security Service head Karmi Gillon is slated to go before the Shamgar Commission for one last time today, wrapping up the three months of inquiry into the assassination of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. Gillon has already appeared before the commission on several occasions.

Sources said the commission is expected to issue a report on its findings in about a month, and that no dramatic developments were expected in today's final hearing. Yesterday, H., the GSS officer responsible for handling intelligence information on extremists, was questioned for four hours by the commission and lawyers for the other officers who were cautioned by the commission.



Forecast: Partly cloudy, rise in temperatures.

AROUND THE WORLD

Location	Low	High	Forecast
Alexandria	18	21	cloudy
Bahia	17	21	cloudy
Buenos Aires	12	18	cloudy
Cairo	18	25	partly cloudy
Copenhagen	10	15	cloudy
Helsinki	10	15	cloudy
London	10	15	cloudy
Los Angeles	15	20	cloudy
Moscow	10	15	cloudy
New York	15	20	cloudy
Paris	15	20	cloudy
Stockholm	10	15	cloudy
Tokyo	15	20	cloudy
Toronto	10	15	cloudy
Vancouver	10	15	cloudy
Zurich	10	15	cloudy

Winning cards

In yesterday's Mifal Hapayis daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the 8 of spades, ace of hearts, ace of diamonds, and king of clubs.

Bikur Holim blamed for wrongful death

JUDY SIEGEL

THE Health Ministry has filed a police complaint against Jerusalem's Bikur Holim Hospital for allegedly refusing to treat a patient brought by Magen David Adom's mobile intensive care unit (MICU) three weeks ago.

The incident involved an elderly man who collapsed with a heart attack in the center of town. Passersby called MDA, which sent the MICU. The MICU doctor and paramedic called Bikur Holim, saying they were bringing in a patient for emergency care.

According to MDA, its staffers were told to bring the patient to the cardiac duty hospital, as Bikur Holim's emergency room was filled to overflowing. MDA said it nevertheless brought the patient, because the duty hospital was too far away.

According to Bikur Holim's statement then, a nurse went to the MICU "and saw that no resuscitation was being carried out on the patient, thus she declared he was dead and could be taken to another hospital." According to MDA, the patient died on the way to Shaare Zedek Hospital.

Ministry Director-General Heri Oren announced the action after a ministry probe.

Bikur Holim management said last night it had received the committee's findings but not the police complaint. As a result the hospital has transferred the nurse involved - a 20-year veteran - to another department.

Rafael workers stage protest

DAVID RUDGE

SOME 400 of angry Rafael workers staged a noisy demonstration outside the Labor Party's headquarters in Tel Aviv yesterday in protest against planned dismissals at the giant armaments development authority.

A group of workers, led by action committee chairman David Zuckman, later went inside and met with the party secretary-general Nissim Zivili.

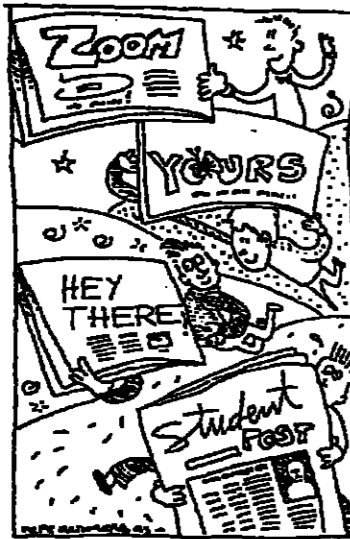
"We spoke for over 90 minutes and outlined our problems and demands," said Zuckman after the meeting. "We are pressing for the dismissals to be stopped immediately and for managing director Yitzhak Gat to be dismissed instead."

Zuckman said they had also put forward their proposals for a recovery plan for the concern, which last year lost over NIS 300 million. Under these proposals the workers would agree to the retirement of up to 1,000 of the present 4,300-strong work force over the next two years, instead of the compulsory dismissals planned by management.

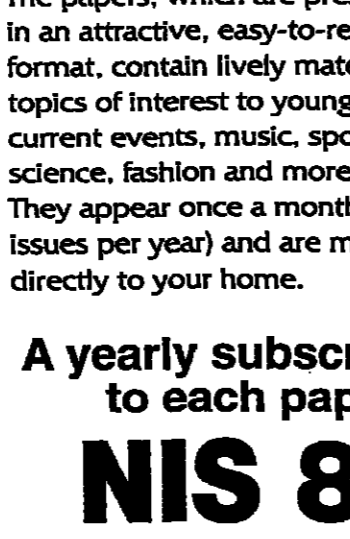
Zuckman said the remaining workers would accept a wage freeze over the same period, in return for deferring plans to turn Rafael into a public company.

They speak English, but do they read it???

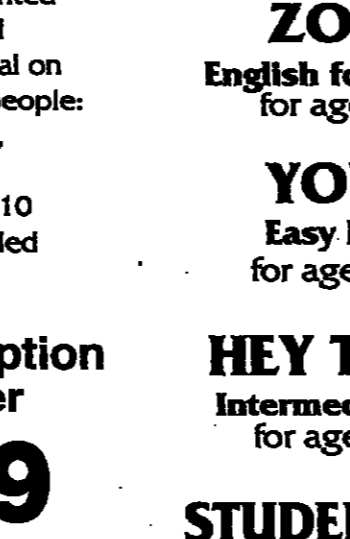
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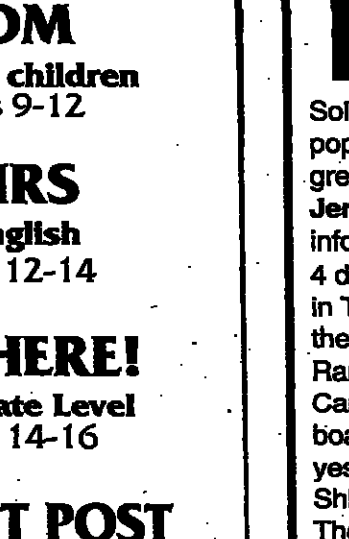
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EILAT AND THE NEGEV

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TODAY

Ouman flap settled as Polgat, Histadrut reach deal

MICHAL YUDELMAN

THE Ouman crisis was finally settled last night 47 days after the plant was shut down as the Histadrut and Ouman workers' representatives signed an agreement with Polgat's management over pension and severance pay for the textile plant's workers.

Polgat agreed to pay the workers severance pay ranging from 140 percent to 174 percent instead of the previously agreed 145% to 190% which it had reneged on.

In addition, Polgat promised to operate the Oskim plant, which closed down some six weeks ago, for another month-and-a-half, during which the management would negotiate with entrepreneurs who wish to purchase the plant in Ofakim.

Polgat also agreed to give workers with 10 years' seniority and three months to retirement age, pension rights in the Mivtahim pension fund until they reach retirement age.

Histadrut Chairman MK Amir Peretz repeated his statement that the Histadrut is prepared to buy the factory for the workers until an entrepreneur interested in the plant can be found. Peretz also asked Polgat's management to make an effort to make good on the 200,000 sweater order that was organized by the Histadrut.

Textile workers union chief Yehuda Yaish called the agreement an important Histadrut achievement because the severance pay being offered is much higher than set by law.



Students at Ramat Gan's Blich High School cheer following Prime Minister Shimon Peres's victory in their school elections yesterday. (Reuters)

Peres sweeps mock elections

MICHAL YUDELMAN

PRIME Minister Shimon Peres and the left-wing bloc won a sweeping victory yesterday in the mock elections at Ramat Gan's Blich High School.

Peres received 61% of the votes in the elections for prime minister, compared with Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu's 39%, while the left-wing bloc received 56% of the votes and the right-wing bloc 38%.

In the votes for individual parties, Labor received 46%, the Likud-Tsomet list 36%, Meretz 10%, the Third Way 6% and Moleket 2%.

The Blich mock elections are taken seriously because they have accurately "predicted" the results of the Knesset elections in three previous election years. The outcome of the Blich elections indicated the Likud takeover in 1977, the party in 1988 and Labor's return to power in 1992.

For the past two weeks, Blich's

grounds have turned into a political campaign arena, with candidates from all parties courting the 800 pupils. Labor gave them a rock show, the Likud arranged a dance party, the Third Way sent them personal letters and Meretz gave out fortune cookies (advising them to do the right thing and vote for Meretz).

Both Labor and Likud leaders warned yesterday that the Blich results must be taken with a grain of salt, since the pupils do not represent the Arabs, haredim, kibbutzim and settlers - sectors with major influence on the Knesset elections.

"Mazel tov to Shimon Peres, but we'll win the real elections," Netanyahu said yesterday.

Likud officials pointed out that they had won mock elections held in other schools, noting that in the ORT school in Acre, for ex-

ample, the Likud had received 32.7%, Tsomet 22.7%, and Labor 31.1%. The Acre elections were held two weeks ago.

Finance Minister Avraham Shohat, however, said the Blich elections are a signal that Labor is "headed in the right direction. When you conduct the right economic policy you get dividends. The economic improvement is part of the fruit of peace and the people in Israel understand that very well."

Likud Knesset faction chairman Moshe Katsav expressed hope that this time the Blich results will not reflect the Knesset election results.

Environment Minister Yossi Sarid (Meretz) said the results show Meretz has maintained its standing with the public, despite the gloomy predictions to the contrary.

Liav Collins contributed to this report.

Talks with Syria to resume this month

Assad agrees regardless of early elections

DAMASCUS - US Secretary of State Warren Christopher announced yesterday that Israel and Syria would resume peace talks on February 26 at Wye Plantation in Maryland.

He told a news conference after day-long meetings in Damascus that Syrian President Hafez Assad had agreed that the negotiations should proceed regardless of whether Israel calls early elections.

"Both of the leaders agree that headway has been made in the [previous rounds of] talks and they should continue," Christopher said, referring also to Prime Minister Shimon Peres, whom he met in Jerusalem on Monday.

"The parties want to preserve a continuity of the negotiations whether or not there are early elections in Israel," he added.

Christopher said the talks

would focus initially on security and hopefully would lead to a framework for a peace treaty.

A senior US official, who briefed reporters later, insisted Assad was not reluctant to resume the talks but wanted assurances from the Americans that

Peres: No pullout from Lebanon until government proves itself, Page 2

Israel indeed remained committed to pressing ahead with the negotiations despite its domestic political situation.

Christopher made new proposals, according to the official, who added the discussions were inconclusive.

Christopher told reporters afterwards that he had a "good

meeting" with Assad at the presidential palace, and would have more to say after a previously unscheduled dinner meeting with Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Shara.

Christopher is due to return to Israel today for more talks with Peres, and also plans to meet PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat.

Christopher said the decision to hold a third round of talks at the Wye Conference Center reflected the two sides' commitment to achieve a peace agreement this year.

"We expect that progress can continue to be made," he said.

There are concerns the process could be put on hold, or even backslide, in the heat of an Israeli election.

"You don't put peace on hold," the senior US official said.

Tsomet to okay clause linking it with Likud

SARAH HONIG and LIAT COLLINS

TSOMET will agree to a clause in its agreement with the Likud, in which it more firmly commits itself not to defect from its electoral bloc with the Likud and opt for a parliamentary alliance with Labor, should the joint list lose the next elections.

This was announced last night by Tsomet leader Rafael Eitan and his chief aide, Doron Shmueli.

The Likud-Tsomet agreement to run for Knesset together will probably not be signed today as originally announced, because various MKs want to make more changes in the agreement.

The three main concerns are: that Tsomet remain with the Likud after the elections; preserving the religious status quo; and reducing the number of Tsomet candidates with safe slots on the list.

At the end of a three-hour faction meeting yesterday, Likud faction chairman Moshe Katsav said the party had authorized Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu to continue negotiating the memorandum of understanding with Tsomet.

"The majority of faction members expressed support for the formulation of the understanding," Katsav said. "Others raised reservations and amendments to be included in it. The final version of the agreement will have to be presented again to the faction and the Likud central committee for approval."

According to Netanyahu, the main worry is whether the Tsomet MKs would remain with the Likud for the four years after the elections and not transfer support to Labor should Shimon Peres head the next government.

"I don't think they intend going over to Labor," Netanyahu said. "They want to go together, and go together for victory." But he added the party's lawyers would amend the agreement to ensure this would not be legally possible.

Netanyahu is seeking to plug the loophole with a clause saying that "the two parties will set up a joint electoral bloc and will then function in a joint parliamentary bloc after the elections."

Eitan agreed to this, as he did to a clause in which the joint list vows to uphold the status quo in religious affairs. Netanyahu implied he would work to include such a clause. Many in the Likud fear Tsomet's anti-religious image could have a detrimental effect on the support Netanyahu could otherwise expect for his prime-ministerial bid from the religious sector.

However, Likud legal adviser Eitan Haberman pointed out to Netanyahu that there is really no legal way to oblige Tsomet to stay wedded to the Likud after the elections, though a clearer clause would put a moral onus on Tsomet not to renege on its commitment.

"There is a framework agreement but not a final agreement," Netanyahu said. "We're talking about uniting two parties. In all the checks we ran, we found we would receive an additional number of mandates together, above what we could get separately."

"Unity is the most important tool for winning the elections. We suffered a disaster because of the splintering in 1992," he said.

Dan Meridor was the most senior of the Likud MKs to publicly

Smoothing ruffled feathers

BACKGROUND SARAH HONIG

BOTH Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu and Tsomet leader Rafael Eitan strove yesterday to downplay the fear of many in the Likud that Tsomet might abandon the joint list should Netanyahu and the combined list fail to win the elections.

Netanyahu argued after the morning's negotiations with Eitan that "we are going together in order to stay together. This is not mere temporary opportunism. We are going to campaign together and we are going to stay together after the elections as well."

At his side, Eitan chimed in: "One doesn't get married in order to divorce. I don't want to hear about Tsomet later joining a Labor coalition, because we are in this to win and we will form our own coalition. We are not defeatists who are making plans now for an electoral rout. We have victory in our sights."

However, the last word last night from both parties was that the new clause that will probably be incorporated in the agreement today would stipulate that "neither party would join any coalition without the other."

Eitan aide Doron Shmueli said last night that his party agrees to this formulation and stressed that "Tsomet did not go into this arrangement with the Likud in order to hop and skip from one alliance to another."

He did indicate, however, that his party would ask for a face-saving addition to the agreement that would grant it the right to run again independently in the elections scheduled for the year 2000.

Netanyahu, though he was not formally obliged to bring the agreement with Tsomet before his party's Knesset faction, did so and was rebuffed and asked to deliver a better agreement. Despite this setback, however, it is noted that the agreement ultimately needs the ratification of

(Continued on Page 2)

Document reveals Israel received plutonium from US during Cold War

WASHINGTON (AP) - During the Cold War the United States shipped nearly a ton of plutonium to 39 countries, including Israel, South Africa, Iraq and Iran, Energy Department documents reveal.

In most cases the amount of plutonium was exceedingly small - much less than what would be

needed to make a nuclear weapon - and was used in research as part of the Atoms for Peace program, according to the department.

The exports, never previously revealed, are contained in a wide range of documents and previously classified records released by the department yesterday as part of a promise by President Clinton for more openness on nuclear issues now that the Cold War is over.

Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary has campaigned for wider disclosure of the country's atomic secrets. Earlier she released a detailed list of nuclear weapons tests conducted in Nevada during the Cold War, information previously kept secret.

It also has been widely assumed by private experts that the United States has about 100 metric tons (110 tons) of plutonium in weapons, storage and as highly radioactive waste at weapons plants. In its latest inventory, the department put the figure at 99.5 metric tons (109.7 tons).

Never before revealed, however, was the extent to which highly radioactive plutonium, which can be used in nuclear weapons, has been made available to other nations, including some now consid-

ered unfriendly. While the United States shipped nearly a ton of plutonium abroad over the past 50 years, it also brought about six tons of the material into the United States from such countries as Canada, Britain and Taiwan, according to the newly disclosed records.

Most of the US plutonium went to America's European allies - West Germany, Britain, France and Belgium - which together accounted for nearly 708 kilograms of the material. Germany alone received more than 517 kilograms.

But other countries received much smaller amounts, generally less than 0.9 kilograms. According to Energy Department officials, these countries included Netherlands, Israel, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela, South Vietnam, Pakistan, South Korea, India, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina and Czechoslovakia.

Most of the shipments were made in the 1960s, although some came as late as the early 1980s, according to the department files.

The core of a nuclear weapon, or "pit," is about the size of a grapefruit and requires about 2 kilograms to 4 kilograms of plutonium.

Jordan proposes second ambassador to Israel

AMMAN (AP) - The government yesterday proposed Omar Rifai, a Foreign Ministry official and peace negotiator, as its second ambassador to Israel.

Rifai, 39, would replace Marwan Mouasher, who was appointed information minister in a new cabinet formed last weekend.

After a cabinet meeting, Mouasher told reporters that the government had proposed Rifai to the Israeli government.

"We will wait for Israel's response before we officially appoint him as our next ambassador," Mouasher said.

Rifai had worked closely with Israeli officials during negotiations that culminated in the October 1994 peace treaty. He later supervised a technical committee which concluded a series of bilateral cooperation agreements in a drive to normalize relations between the two countries.

'Mortgage banks have bilked customers out of NIS 620m.'

EVELYN GORDON

MORTGAGE banks have overcharged clients by some NIS 620 million over the past 15 years, according to a study sent to MKs yesterday.

The study was conducted by a business consulting firm at the initiative of its owner, Meir Hoenigbaum, who suspected that he himself was being overcharged.

According to Hoenigbaum's study, most clients between 1980 and 1995 were overcharged between NIS 3,000 and NIS 30,000. The total comes to some NIS 620 million, the study said.

MK Naomi Chazan (Meretz), who chairs the Knesset Economics Committee's consumer affairs

subcommittee, said she will summon an urgent meeting of the committee next week to discuss the report. The committee is also likely to look into possible ways to get the banks to return the money they overcharged clients.

"Every customer who enters a mortgage bank and signs a [loan] agreement is charged large sums which are at best unnecessary and at worst fraudulent," Chazan said.

Chazan said she will also present a bill at next week's meeting forcing banks to tell customers the total cost of a loan before they sign, so that they will not later be surprised at the amount they are being charged.

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MK's immunity lifted; to face hunting charge

THE Knesset House Committee yesterday lifted the immunity of Deputy Interior Minister Salah Tarif (Labor) so he can face charges of illegal hunting.

Tarif is accused of killing six partridges in one shooting session, although the legal hunting quota is five. He did not have a hunting permit. He is the fourth MK to face prosecution from the Knesset, but the only one not facing a corruption charge.

Tarif did not attend the House

Committee meeting but told reporters he does not deny the charge and is willing to face the proceedings.

He said the Nature Reserves Authority was correct in following up all charges of hunting violations. In his defense he said he is an excellent shot and had killed two birds with one bullet.

The incident took place in September 1994. Tarif did not have a hunting license on him and did

not have a permit to hunt in the specific area.

Attorney General Michael Ben-Yair, who asked for Tarif's immunity to be lifted, said of the charges: "I have to note they are not the most serious offenses on the law books. I examined the possibility of not having to request that his immunity be lifted. I asked the NRA prosecutor to examine whether it was an offense which necessitates lifting

his immunity to face charges or whether he could just be given a set fine [as for traffic offenses]."

According to the NRA, hunting without a license is considered a serious offense for which the punishment can be a heavy fine of several thousand shekels or up to one year in prison.

House Committee Chairman Eli Goldschmidt said the concept of political immunity should be reconsidered and altered to cover only incidents directly related to the parliamentarian's work.

LIAT COLLINS

Fire chief's report: Too few fighters came to fatal Ashdod blaze

ONLY four firefighters were present at the most critical time of the fire that broke out in Ashdod a week ago where Tamara Glagashvili was killed, her five-year-old son was seriously injured and 28 tenants suffered from smoke inhalation.

Firefighters from other towns arrived later, according to the findings submitted to Interior Minister Haim Ramon yesterday, who ordered an inquiry into the blaze.

Fire and Rescue Commissioner Uri Manos headed the inquiry which stated that a large police presence at the scene aided firefighters and prevented an even greater disaster.

MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

Manos praised the quick response of the firefighters and their high level of professionalism.

He said they entered the stairwell, sprayed the electricity circuit boards and led the trapped victims out of the building and calmed them down.

The committee found that the fire broke out in an electric circuit box on the first floor.

In his report Manos stressed that the Fire Department is seriously lacking in manpower and equipment.

There is also a need to educate the public in safety precautions and behavior during a fire, he

said.

Manos added that his department planned to investigate during 1996 different methods of dealing with fires in high-rise buildings and technical and safety solutions for buildings built before the 1980's, which he stressed are potential fire hazards.

He emphasized the need to enforce written regulations that would require the full cooperation of all emergency services in Ashdod and to hold emergency drills.

National fire chief Superintendent Efraim Ma'aravi resigned from his position last week in protest against the government's neglect of the fire and rescue services.



Housing and Construction Minister Binjamin Ben-Eliezer cuts the ribbon opening the new Almagor-Ginossar road yesterday, as Public Works Authority director-general Benzion Salmon (in tie) looks on. (Scoop 80)

Sanctions kept dangerous substance unit from blast

A SPECIAL mobile unit for dealing with dangerous substances belonging to the Beersheba fire department was sidelined Monday because of sanctions by firefighters, and was therefore unavailable for use after an explosion at the Bromine Compounds plant south of Beersheba.

Beersheba firefighters who responded to a call to come to the plant after the blast, in which 10 workers were injured, arrived with three crews and a regular fire truck, without the special vehicle.

National Firefighters Union spokesman Gershon Zauberman said that the fact that the Ramat Hovav incident ended with only light injuries was "a huge miracle." It would have been impossible to evacuate a large number of workers from an area where they had been exposed to poisonous substances, because the firefighters who responded to the call lacked the necessary equipment and training.

There are four mobile units for dealing with dangerous substances, based in Jerusalem, Haifa, Beersheba and Petah Tikva. They were grounded two weeks ago to protest the government's delay in implementing its 1993 decision to transfer NIS 68 million to the Fire and Rescue Service, police and Environment Ministry for

equipment, manpower and training of special units to handle such substances.

He added that Knesset Interior Committee chairman Yehoshua Matza warned the Interior and Finance ministers about the matter, which was also brought to the attention of Prime Minister Shimon Peres and State Comptroller Miriam Ben-Porat. He described the situation as "a ticking bomb," and said that if no solution is found "we can expect, God forbid, a tragedy whose results I don't even want to imagine."

8 pupils hurt in chemistry experiment

EIGHT pupils and their teacher were injured when a chemical experiment at the Recanati National Science Museum of Haifa went wrong. One of the pupils suffered serious eye injuries; the rest were lightly hurt. The injured were taken to the Bnai Zion (Rothschild) Hospital in Haifa. Police are investigating.

David Rudge

All attempts by Interior Minister Haim Ramon to obtain the funds have failed. Ramon called on members of the firefighters' works committee to meet with him tomorrow about the grounding of the mobile unit, to try to find a solution. (Iim)

Marriage blacklist has been reduced

THE marriage blacklist, which included some 5,000 people a few months ago, has already been reduced to 2,500 names and will be further reduced to about 700 or 800 within the next few months, Chief Sephardi Rabbi Elisha Bakshi-Doron said in a letter to Knesset Law Committee chairman Dedi Zucker (Meretz).

In the letter, which Zucker distributed to reporters yesterday, Bakshi-Doron said the list had been cut in half by removing the names of those:

- no longer living;
- those who had been permitted

EVELYN GORDON

to marry by a rabbinical court but never removed from the list;

- those whose files were examined by the chief rabbis and who were declared able to marry;
- and those for whom the prohibition was no longer relevant for some other reason.

The chief rabbis have also ordered the rabbinical courts to re-examine all cases in which there is some doubt about the verdict, he said.

Bakshi-Doron stressed that no one is put on the blacklist unless

there has been a definitive verdict by the rabbinical courts forbidding him to marry.

Furthermore, the blacklist contains only those who definitely cannot marry and not those about whom there are merely doubts, he said.

As a result, some 600 people whose Jewishness is in doubt but who are not definitely non-Jewish will soon be removed from the list, he said.

Bakshi-Doron said that all those who appear on the list have been informed, so they can try to clarify their status.

TA parents battle petition on experimental program

PARENTS are happy with Tel Aviv's experimental program: allowing them to choose their children's high schools, and do not want it canceled, 16 parent committees told the High Court of Justice yesterday.

The group, comprised of the Central Parent Committee of Tel Aviv-Jaffa plus the parent committees of all 15 elementary schools included in the program, therefore asked to be added as respondents to a petition against the program filed last week.

The petition, by a handful of Tel Aviv residents, had asked that the program not be extended for a third year, because they

charged that it was increasing social gaps.

The parent committees, represented by attorney Rhanan Herzog, said in their response to the petition that they have an "unequivocally positive opinion" of the program.

Before parental choice was introduced, many students from the poorer neighborhoods of south Tel Aviv dropped out of the northern high schools to which they were assigned, the response said. Now that students are choosing their own schools, the motivation to succeed is much

higher - as has the success rate - and parent-teacher cooperation has increased dramatically.

Furthermore, the northern schools are given an incentive of two additional class hours for each southern pupil they accept, the response noted. As a result, far from turning into "ghettos," the northern schools are actively competing for southern pupils, and the number of southern pupils in northern schools has increased 15%, it said.

The response also charged that the petitioners distorted the data they used to show that social gaps

have increased because of the program. According to the petitioners' own data, the percentage of pupils who failed a standard reading comprehension test was only 25% last year in one of the top southern high schools, City School #9, compared to 45.2% in one of the top northern schools, the New High School. This shows that weaker students are not staying in the south, the response said.

In fact, a municipal study showed the gap in achievement levels between northern and southern high schools to be no more than a third of a grade, the response added.

EVELYN GORDON

NEWS IN BRIEF

Greater choice for women soldiers

Women soldiers will soon be able to list their service preferences on a questionnaire prior to their induction into the IDF, under a new plan being worked out by OC Women's Corps.

The system is already being used for men soldiers, and its success led to the decision to expand it to the women. Until now, their placement was determined during basic training. If the new program receives final approval, it will first be tried out on a sample of women soldiers. On Levy

Peres meets Kenyan president

Prime Minister Shimon Peres met yesterday with Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi, who arrived in the country for an eye operation. Arap Moi visited Israel just a few months ago to pay condolences after the assassination of Yitzhak Rabin. David Makovsky

Women may retain maiden names

The Knesset last night passed a law which will allow married women to retain their maiden names for official registration and documents. The law, presented by Knesset Law Committee Chairman Dedi Zucker (Meretz), passed second and third readings easily despite previous opposition by haredi MKs.

Under the new law, live-in lovers will also be able to adopt their partners' names without the possibility of the Interior Ministry objecting. Men will be able to assume their wives' maiden name or couples can adopt a new joint name. Homosexuals can also choose to assume their partner's last name.

"A person's name is a private affair and the state's intervention into it must be stopped," Zucker said. Liat Collins

Planners approve TA transit plan

The National Planning Council yesterday approved plans submitted by Tel Aviv Metropolitan Administration for a Mass Transit System.

The plans had been the source of conflict between the administration and Transport Ministry Director-General Elisha Hasson, who had announced last month that he was unilaterally withdrawing ministry support from the project because of what he described as incompetence and mismanagement. He had called for a new survey by a body other than the administration.

Administration director Ilit Rozansky said yesterday that he regarded the decision as approval of his body's work. Haim Shapiro

Knesset approves gas taxes

The Knesset Finance Committee approved a 27.5 percent increase in gas taxes yesterday, which is the reason for the recent 15 percent hike in the price of gas to the consumer. The cabinet decided on the tax hike as part of the budget revisions it approved last month. It is expected to bring in NIS 950 million this year. The increase raises the total tax burden on gasoline to 69 percent - still slightly lower than the European average of 77 percent. Evelyn Gordon

Incompetent representation can be basis for retrial

EVELYN GORDON

ANYONE who was convicted because his lawyer was incompetent will now be able to get a retrial, the Knesset Law Committee decided yesterday.

Until now, retrials could be held only if new evidence was discovered; if a piece of evidence introduced in the original trial turned out to have been false; or if someone else was later tried and convicted for the same crime. Because of this, there have been very few retrials in Israeli legal history. However, the committee decided that this list was too restrictive. The legal system is not free from mistakes, noted committee chairman Dedi Zucker (Meretz), and it should not be afraid to correct those mistakes.

The committee therefore decided that, in a case where there is a "real suspicion" that the conviction was false, the president of the Supreme Court will be able to order a retrial. In particular, he will be able to order retrials for people who were convicted because their attorneys mishandled their cases. Before deciding to order a retrial, however, the court president will have to consider the opinions of both the attorney-general and the chief public defender, once this latter office exists. A bill creating this office has not yet passed the Knesset.

Kiryat Arba restaurant owner cleared of charges he praised Rabin's murder

EVELYN GORDON

THE army yesterday canceled an order forbidding soldiers to eat at a Kiryat Arba fast-food restaurant, after reports saying the owners had praised the murder of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin proved to be false.

This was discovered after the army, at the order of the High Court of Justice, finally held a hearing at which both the alleged witness and the restaurant's owners, Elitzur and Aviva Butavia, were present.

Attorney Naftali Werzberger, representing the Butavias, noted that had the army acceded to the couple's request for a hearing immediately after the event, the couple would have been spared the serious financial damage which their business has incurred over the past three months.

Werzberger said he and his clients will consider suing the army for financial compensation.

There is no question that a grave injustice has been done to the man," he said.

The army had banned soldiers from eating at the restaurant immediately after Rabin's murder, due to reports that Butavia had celebrated news of the murder by blowing the shofar and offering passers-by free drinks. Butavia had denied this, saying the res-

taurant was not even open when all this allegedly occurred, and he had certainly not rejoiced at the murder. In fact, in an interview with Channel 1 the following day, he said it would have been better to give up all of Judea and Samaria than to have such a thing happen.

The army refused to give him a hearing, however, saying it had signed statements from two soldiers testifying that these events

had occurred. The Butavias therefore petitioned the High Court, which said the army had no right to deny them a hearing.

At the hearing, held last Thursday, the army succeeded in producing only one of the alleged witnesses. This soldier said all he remembered seeing was Butavia standing with a group of people outside a store. He denied ever having seen shofar-blowing or toasts, according to Werzberger.

New detox technique may wean Bethlehem addicts from drugs

JON IMMANUEL

BETHLEHEM is to become the world's first town to be weaned completely off drugs, using a new form of treatment that will reduce heroin and cocaine use to the point where selling drugs will no longer be profitable, its proponents say.

The project by CITA, an international center for treatment of drug addiction, is based on an "ultra-rapid opiate detoxification" (UROD) process which can wean an addict painlessly off

physical drug dependency in six hours. This is followed by six months of psychotherapy.

CITA operates in Israel, and a dozen countries in North America, Europe and East Asia.

"This is a new concept we have introduced," said CITA founder Dr. Juan Jose Legada of Spain.

The speed of the detoxification process allows CITA to treat up to 6,000 patients a year, and allows for mass, simultaneous detoxification of entire communi-

ties. Until now, when an individual was treated independently of other drug users in his neighborhood or even in his own family, the chances were great that he would return to the habit.

"To treat a town is to stop drug trafficking," and this will reduce the rate of recidivism, Legada said.

Claudette Habash of Caritas, the Vatican-based welfare agency

which is helping fund the project, said that drug use among Palestinians has increased "at least four times since the 1970s," but there are no clear figures as shame often compels families to keep addicts hidden. The new treatment - painless, fast and free to patients - is expected to lure them out of the closet.

She conservatively estimated 150 addicts in Bethlehem and 300-400 among Palestinians in Jerusalem. The drugs come mostly

from Syria and Lebanon.

Bethlehem's drug problem came to light gruesomely six years ago when thieves stole gold teeth from corpses in the Latin cemetery. Mayor Elias Freij said at the time that the thefts were to fund the thieves' drug habit. Drug addicts have been blackmailed and used as informers by Israeli security services. During the intifada dozens were labeled moral degenerates by Hamas moral squads and killed.



A Bosnian soldier walks by the perimeter fence of a prison where arrested Gen. Djordje Cjukic is thought to be held. (AP)

Bosnians arrest Serb general

Outraged Serbs say detention violates peace accord

OUTRAGED Serbs accused the Moslem-led government yesterday of violating the Bosnian peace accord by arresting a Serb general on suspicion of war crimes.

NATO cautioned that the arrest of Gen. Djordje Cjukic threatened to touch off retaliations and jeopardize peacemaking. Brig. Andrew Cumming, a spokesman for the NATO force, described the arrest as "provocative and inflammatory."

"It would be a pity if this encouraged a retaliatory reaction," Cumming said. "Everything is very fragile."

The general is one of eight Serbs the Moslem-led government arrested between Jan. 20 and this past Friday.

Five, including Djukic, were detained on suspicion of war crimes; his driver and two other Serbs being questioned as witnesses will soon be freed, said the chief of the Bosnian security service, Bakir Alispahic.

Alispahic said the government had evidence that Djukic and Col. Aleksa Krsmanovic participated in mass killings of civilians in the Sarajevo region.

The other three war crimes suspects were believed to have killed civilians in eastern Bosnia and were arrested recently in a civilian car carrying rifles, hand grenades and large amount of ammunition, he said.

SRECKO LATAL
SARAJEVO

None of the five has been indicted by the international tribunal on war crimes in the former Yugoslavia in The Hague, Netherlands, which was set up by the United Nations in May 1993. The government has asked the tribunal to examine evidence against the five men and has promised to release any who are not charged.

The self-designated Serb premier, Rajko Kasagic, lodged a protest yesterday with a UN human rights official, Elizabeth Rehn, accusing the government of violating the peace pact by arresting Djukic.

Djukic, his driver and a Serb colonel were arrested Jan. 30, apparently after taking a wrong turn onto government territory near Sarajevo. Cumming said. He denied a Serb claim that Djukic was on his way to a meeting with NATO officers at the time.

Djukic, in his seventies, is the highest-ranking Serb detained by the government. He was a logistics specialist and close aide to Bosnian Serb military commander Gen. Ratko Mladic during the war.

The Serbs' commander for the Sarajevo region, Maj. Gen. Dragomir Milosevic, blamed NATO for the arrests, saying its troops had failed to provide Serb soldiers and civil-

ians with any sense of security.

"They were taken to jail without any explanation," Milosevic said. "They were unarmed."

A senior Bosnian army officer, speaking on condition of anonymity, indicated the detained officers may be charged with war crimes before a local court despite the promise to release those not charged by the tribunal.

He also did not rule out trying that the government would try to swap the officers for 300 to 400 war prisoners the government accuses the Bosnian Serbs of pressing into forced labor.

The international tribunal has indicted 45 Serbs and seven Bosnian Croats. Only one, a Serb, is in custody. Among the indicted are Mladic and Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic.

The only Serb in government custody accused of war crimes is Borislav Herak, a soldier who was detained in 1993.

A spokesman for the international tribunal, Christian Chartier, said its investigators were interviewing three Bosnian Serbs the government said it took into custody on Friday.

Chartier had no immediate comment on details of the case.

Bringing suspected war criminals to justice and tracing more than 20,000 missing from Bosnia's war is considered key to the US-brokered peace plan. (AP)

Clinton subpoenaed to Whitewater trial

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) - President Clinton has already called the Whitewater accusations against him nonsense. Now he has the chance to say it in court.

A judge ordered Clinton to testify at next month's trial of his partners in the failed Arkansas land deal.

While White House lawyers pushed for an appearance on video, lawyers for James and Susan McDougal said a personal appearance by the president would make his testimony more credible.

The McDougals were partners of Clinton and the first lady in the Whitewater land development from 1989-92, when Clinton was governor of Arkansas.

Mrs. McDougal is accused of receiving a \$300,000 loan that a former Little Rock banker and municipal judge, David Hale, says Clinton pressured him to make. Clinton, who has not been charged, has denied it.

The McDougals and Gov. Jim Guy Tucker, who had other business dealings with the McDougals, face trial March 4 on conspiracy and fraud charges.

A White House source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said, "We expect that... discussions with Mrs. McDougal's lawyers will result in the president providing videotaped testimony."

David E. Kendall, Clinton's personal lawyer, said that the president would cooperate "in an appropriate fashion."

In the order approving the subpoena, US District Judge George Howard Jr. directed the lawyers to proceed in a way that does not interfere with the presi-

dent's official duties, perhaps by using videotape or even satellite. Howard ruled that Clinton's testimony was vital to giving the McDougals a fair trial.

Clinton's testimony would afford him an opportunity to confront under oath Hale's claim - the single most serious allegation made against the president.

Clinton has called the allegations nonsense and said he doesn't recall ever talking to Hale about money.

"The government case is built on the accusations of Mr. Hale," James McDougal said. "We'll let the jury listen to Mr. Hale's testimony and let them listen to Mr. Clinton's testimony and let them decide who to believe."

Clinton's testimony would not be without precedent. President Jefferson testified in writing in the trial of political leader Aaron Burr. President Ford testified by videotape in the trial of his attempted assassin and President Carter testified by videotape in the trial of financier Robert Vesco.

President Reagan testified by videotape at the Iran-Contra trial of John Poindexter after Reagan left office.

Last month, Hillary Rodham Clinton became the first presidential spouse to be subpoenaed by a federal grand jury.

The first lady appeared Jan. 26 before the Whitewater grand jury in Washington to answer questions about billing documents from her former Little Rock law firm that showed up in the White House two years after Whitewater prosecutors first subpoenaed them.

Zambian police put clamp on media

LUSAKA (AP) - Zambian police arrested three editors of the independent Post newspaper yesterday and charged them with publishing secrets about government plans to change the constitution.

The editors were also charged with having 40 copies of the banned edition, declared a "prohibited publication" by President Frederick Chiluba.

John Sangwa said chief editor Fred M'embe, managing editor Bright Mwanga and special projects editor Masuato Phiri were arrested after police searched their homes and offices.

They were expected to appear in court within the next 48 hours. The secrecy charge carries a maximum penalty of 25 years in jail.

Sangwa said the journalists

were accused of "receiving and publishing classified information and being in possession of prohibited literature."

President Frederick Chiluba has battled repeatedly with the Post since sweeping into power in democratic elections in 1991, ousting longtime ruler Kenneth Kaunda.

Chiluba issued a decree banning the day's issue, but it came too late to stop distribution. The issue carried a report that the government was secretly planning a referendum on controversial amendments to the constitution.

The amendments were aimed at excluding Kaunda from making an electoral comeback. Kaunda led the nation to independence from Britain in 1964 and ran an

authoritarian regime for 27 years.

In Kenya, the government, having backed away from plans to curtail press freedoms, said yesterday there is still a need to change laws governing the media.

President Daniel arap Moi, after intense local and international criticism, ordered the withdrawal of two proposed bills that would have licensed journalists, newspapers, radio and television.

"Attorney General Amos Wako told a workshop of journalists yesterday the government still believes there is a need for change."

"Freedom is subject to restrictions, special duties and responsibilities," he said. "You have to decide if you are a profession and want recognition."

Tajik rebels disarm

TURSUNZADE (Reuters) - An 11-day crisis which brought Tajikistan to the brink of a new civil war neared a peaceful end yesterday after a second warlord who took up arms and won a government purge agreed to disarm.

Senior aides to President Imomali Rakhmonov offered to quit on Sunday, but the resignations only take effect if irregular troops disarm and army units pull back to barracks by today.

"I want even militiamen to carry sweets or bread instead of guns," warlord Ibadullo Baimatov told a cheering crowd of 500 supporters outside a hotel which has become his stronghold.

"You can return home and go back to work tomorrow," he said in Tursunzade, 50 km west of the capital Dushanbe.

Baimatov spoke after meeting a Russian peacekeeping forces commander and a fellow rebel. Tajik army colonel Makhmud Khudoyberdiyev, who withdrew his troops to barracks.

Khudoyberdiyev's forces advanced last Thursday into the fringes of Dushanbe, threatening to plunge this former Soviet republic of 5.7 million bordering Afghanistan and China into a re-run of its 1992 civil war.

The two warlords fought in the pro-government popular front militia in the civil war, but had become increasingly angered by the control over power and money exercised by Rakhmonov's inner circle of strong men from his southern Kulyab heartland.

UN demands Japan compensate 'comfort women'

GENEVA (AP) - The UN investigator into violence against women demanded Tuesday that Japan pay compensation and apologize individually to females forced to be sex slaves to Japanese troops during World War II.

The report by Radhika Coomaraswamy, a Sri Lankan legal expert assigned by the UN Human Rights Commission, accused the Japanese of "extraordinary inhumanity" in running the system.

The report, the first major UN condemnation of the practice in the past 51 years, concluded a yearlong investigation.

Women and girls as young as 14 were confined to narrow cubicles and subjected to multiple rapes daily. They "were expected to serve as many as 60 to 70 men per day," Ms. Coomaraswamy said.

"The end of the war brought no relief to a large proportion of the 'comfort women' still in service, since many were killed by the retreating Japanese troops or, more often, simply abandoned."

Many of the 200,000 victims were from Korea, and the South Korean government, as well as human rights organizations who have campaigned for the women, were quick to welcome the report.

The Korean Council for Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan said the report would help resolve the issue. "Japan has been trying to avoid all legal responsibilities," the council said.

Brother of former minister slain

SAN SEBASTIAN (Reuters) - A prominent lawyer, the brother of a former justice minister, was shot dead in the northern Spanish city of San Sebastian yesterday, regional officials said.

Fernando Mugica, 61, was shot in the head in a street in the city center at about 1:30 p.m., a spokeswoman for the Basque regional government told Reuters.

He was the brother of Enrique Mugica, a founder of the ruling Socialist Party, former justice minister and candidate for the Guipuzcoa region in the March 3 election.

Mugica was rushed to hospital where he died at about 2:35 p.m., a hospital spokeswoman said. "We are still taking testimony from witnesses," a police spokeswoman said, adding that the

attack bore the hallmarks of the outlawed Basque separatist group ETA.

Witnesses quoted by the Spanish news agency Efe said they saw two young people running away from the scene.

ETA (Basque Homeland and Freedom) guerrillas have often attacked political and military figures in their violent campaign for an independent state and typically use car bombs or street shootings.

The dead man's brother, as justice minister in the 1980s, laid the foundation for the current policy of scattering convicted ETA members in prisons across Spain.

The most recent fatality in an ETA attack was artillery commander Luciano Cortizo, 44, killed in a car bomb attack in Leon on December 22.

US cautions China over Taiwan

WASHINGTON (AP) - With China making threatening gestures toward Taiwan, Washington is urging Beijing to tone down its military posturing and cautioning that any use of force against the island would be "of grave concern to the United States."

Taiwan was high on the agenda as Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Li Zhaoxing opened three days of talks with US officials.

A senior administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said there was evidence that the Chinese intend to hold large-scale military exercises in waters that separate the mainland from the island.

The official said that during talks at the State Department, it was pointed out to Li that the Taiwan Relations Act makes it US

policy "to consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States."

He said "we don't get specific" on the question of how the United States might react.

The US official said he believed that all the talk of military action if Taiwan declared independence was "psychological warfare" designed to hold down the pro-independence vote in the March 23 elections on Taiwan.

The US maintains a formidable Western Pacific naval presence, but US officials were steering clear of any military threats.

In Beijing, Foreign Ministry spokesman Shen Guofang refused to say whether Beijing was planning military exercises.

"I do not want to comment on whether there will be military exercises or what kind of military exercises there will be, because it is purely the affair of the military," Shen said.

Meanwhile, a senior US trade official leading a fact-finding mission to China said yesterday he will be looking for hard proof that

Beijing is punishing the producers of pirated goods.

The official, who requested anonymity, will report to US Trade Representative Mickey Kantor, who can order sanctions if he judges China's anti-piracy efforts to be insufficient.

The official stressed that Kantor has not made a decision or set a timetable for any punitive action.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Shen Guofang said threats of sanctions "will have no impact on China because the China market is a highly competitive market."

"If the US side intends to impose sanctions against China, it will only end up harming the business interests of the US itself."

Industry associations are expected to announce soon that the cost of piracy to US firms now exceeds the US \$866 million lost to piracy in China last year, the US official said.

He expressed particular concern about 34 Chinese compact disc factories, many of which are suspected of producing pirated CDs, video discs and high-value CD-ROMS for export.

All CD-ROMS produced in

China are pirated and CDs carrying \$30,000 worth of software sell for around \$6 in China and Hong Kong, he said.

Under an agreement a year ago which narrowly averted a trade war with the United States, China promised to close pirate CD factories, destroy their equipment and prosecute violators.

The official said China has conducted thousands of raids on retailers and set up anti-piracy task forces since the agreement was initiated Feb. 26 last year.

But China still must shut factories making pirated CDs, tighten its borders against pirated goods and prosecute violators, he said.

China also must ease access for US films, software and music to its market. For instance, Chinese censors recently rejected the movie *Apollo 13*, starring Tom Hanks, he said.

He said he believed China would take the necessary steps.

The official also will question Chinese officials about new regulations to control financial news. The official said the rules were worrying and seemed counter to China's commitments to make its trade system more transparent.



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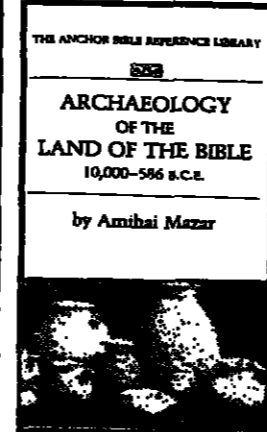
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Islam one step closer to power in Turkey

AMBERIN ZAMAN

THE prospect of an Islamic government in Turkey came closer this week after the caretaker prime minister, Tansu Ciller, said she was giving up attempts to conclude a right-wing alliance with the Motherland Party.

She said the party leader, Mesut Yilmaz, had "rejected all my offers" including one under which she would remain the prime minister and he would share power, as her deputy.

In elections last December, the two right-wing parties were virtually neck and neck behind the Islamic Welfare Party, Refah.

Yilmaz blamed Ciller for the collapse of the talks, saying that all her proposals stipulated that she must remain the prime minister.

Diplomats said they expected that Yilmaz would now negotiate with Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of the Islamic Welfare Party.

"With Ciller out of the picture, Yilmaz has no other choice," one said.

Yilmaz told reporters: "We have not ruled out coalition partnership with Welfare, although it is going to be very difficult to reach com-

mon ground with it."

Many suspect that Yilmaz never intended to join Ciller, Turkey's first woman prime minister. "He can't stand her. It was just a face-saving exercise," a veteran Motherland Party official in Istanbul said.

He claimed that details had already been worked out of a partnership with Refah under which Yilmaz would become prime minister.

But Turkey's powerful military establishment which, like the business elite, is fervently opposed to the Islamists, may pressure Yilmaz into abandoning any such plans.

Ciller has many friends among Turkey's generals because of her unflinching support for the military campaign against Kurdish rebels in the southeast.

The boldness she displayed during the crisis with Greece earlier this week over a pair of disputed islets in the Aegean has helped to raise Ciller's popularity.

Some observers predict that should Yilmaz reach a deal with the Islamists, liberals within his party would defect to Ciller, and bring down his government.

(Daily Telegraph)

Iraqi defector 'to quit politics'

THE Kuwaiti daily *Al-Qabas*, quoting unidentified "Iraqi sources," reported this week that Lt.-Gen. Hussein Kamel, the former head of Iraq's military industrial programs and the keeper of many of Iraq's darkest secrets, had told members of his inner circle he was disappointed with the way fellow Iraqis in exile have been treating him and had decided to quit politics.

They said Kamel, who fled last August to Jordan, has already stopped efforts to bring together Iraqi opposition groups in one united front against Saddam.

Al-Qabas said he has also been complaining that "Iraqi Arab states" have refused to receive him and that he has been "blown by international parties" he had counted on for support. The two countries and the parties were not named.

Kamel's defection, along with his brother and two wives, both daughters of Saddam, embarrassed Saddam and appeared to suggest that the Iraqi's despot's grip on power might be weakening.

There was no comment immediately available from Kamel or his aides in Amman on the *Al-Qabas*

report.

Arab states critical of Saddam and most Iraqi opposition groups in exile view Kamel with suspicion because of his once close ties with the Iraqi president. They also question his declared commitment to democratic rule in a post-Saddam Iraq.

According to *Al-Qabas*, several of Kamel's supporters in Iraq were arrested after they had spoken with him by phone. They included army officers and a former senior official at the Ministry of Industry, it said. Jordan, *Al-Qabas* reported, has withheld its support for Kamel and that all he had left in Jordan was the "rights of hospitalities."

Quoting the Iraqi sources, the newspaper said Kamel has been unable to meet with King Hussein since the defector threatened to leave Jordan if it hosted a meeting of Iraqi opposition groups to discuss a federation in Iraq.

Kamel rejects the idea, arguing that it would lead to the secession of the Shi'ite Moslem south of the country and the Kurdish north. The central part of Iraq is predominantly Sunni, Islam's largest denomination.

(AP)

Algeria denies report on Islamist leader release

Algerian authorities this week denied a local newspaper report that said the country's top jailed Islamist leader would be released this month, the official Algerian news agency APS said.

"One authorized official source has described the reported information as peddling of rumors to which he projects the most clear denial," APS said.

The source was reacting to a report in the French-language daily *Le Tribune* which said that Abassi Madani, in jail since 1991, could be freed very soon, linking his release to a possible cease-fire to be declared by his group now fighting the government.

Le Tribune, quoting "reliable sources," said Madani, leader of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), could be freed on February 16.

"[An] announcement [of the release] may occur either at the same time as or days before a unilateral cease-fire," wrote the

newspaper. There was no independent confirmation of the report.

The Islamic Salvation Army (ISA), the armed wing of FIS, has hinted several times in the past few months it was considering a unilateral truce to try to find a way out of the political crisis that has affected Algeria since the authorities canceled elections in 1992 that the FIS was poised to win.

Madani, 64, has been in jail since June 1991 and is currently serving a 12-year jail term for conspiracy to overthrow the state.

At times, he and other FIS leaders have been taken out of prison and put under house arrest for negotiations with the government, only to return to jail when the talks broke down.

Political analysts say it is no longer clear if Madani can control armed militants who since 1992 have waged war against the government in a struggle which has cost 50,000 lives.

(Reuters)

Egypt to try three journalists under new press law

Egypt's prosecutor general this week ordered the trial of three opposition newspaper journalists on charges of libeling a former minister.

The journalists involved are Magdi Ahmed Hussein, editor-in-chief of the Islamist *al-Sha'ab*, Mostafa Bakri, editor-in-chief of the daily *al-Ahram*, and Mahmoud Bakri, who writes for *Sous Helwan* newspaper and *al-Sha'ab*.

Hussein was sentenced last week to one year in prison with hard labor for libeling a minister's son.

The three men are charged with libeling former religious endowments minister Mohammed al-Mahjoub in articles that appeared in their various publications during parliamentary elections at the end of last year and last month after Mahjoub lost his post in a

cabinet reshuffle.

The ruling National Democratic Party won a sweeping victory in the elections, which were marred by widespread violence and opposition complaints of forgery.

Mahjoub won a seat in Helwan constituency, south of Cairo.

Mostafa Bakri, whose paper often takes a pro-Islamist line, also contested the seat but withdrew, accusing NDP supporters of beating his election agents and rigging ballot boxes.

A trial date has not been set.

The journalists will be tried under law 93, which was passed by parliament last year and which sets tough penalties for libel and misinformation.

The law has enraged journalists, who say the government is using it against opponents who uncover official corruption.

(Reuters)

Radicals digest effects of PA elections

LAMIA LAHOUD

MOST members of the Palestinian National Council will accept Israel's invitation to return to the territories, including those members in the radical fronts, according to Riad al-Malki, a PFLP spokesman in the territories.

However, the Damascus-based leader of the PFLP, George Habash, and his deputy, Abu Ali Mustafa, will not return, Malki said. They contend there are still many Palestinian refugees whom they should continue to represent [from abroad]," Malki said.

He said the PFLP differentiates between returning and between attending the PNC session Yasser Arafat is to call to amend the PNC covenant.

"The PFLP may decide to boycott the session, or they may decide to go and vote against changing the charter," Malki said.

Arafat must call a special session to deal only with changing the charter, for which he needs a two-thirds majority.

Malki said the PFLP's decision

will depend on whether Arafat needs two-thirds of all PNC members or two-thirds of those attending the meeting to make the changes.

The radical PLO groups are adamantly against changing the charter, but Malki said he believes Arafat can come up with a majority given that more than half of the PNC members are Fatah members or independents close to Fatah.

In addition, 186 of the PNC seats have been reserved for Palestinians from the territories. However, these members have never been named.

It is expected that the newly elected Palestinian council will now become part of the PNC and that the remaining 98 seats will be given to local Palestinians of Arafat's choosing.

A PNC member who lives in Jordan disagrees. He said it is not clear how the remaining 98 local representatives will be chosen, but he assumes they will come from locally elected bodies such as municipalities or chambers of commerce.

After the autonomy elections,

Minister Nabil Shaath had suggested that those candidates who almost made it onto the council should be appointed to the PNC.

The PNC member from Jordan, who asked not to be named, said there was no guarantee that Arafat will give a majority since several council members have said they will vote against any amendment to the PNC charter.

Abbas Zaki, a council member from Hebron who ran on the Fatah ticket, said in his election campaign that he would vote against changing the charter.

And Haidar Abdel Shafi, an independent council member, said Israel is making a mistake by insisting on the change and Arafat is making a mistake by committing himself to it.

"This creates a very delicate situation, because Israel now expects Arafat to deliver something he cannot deliver by himself," Shafi said.

He said the Oslo accords have virtually annulled those articles

which call for the destruction of Israel, but many Palestinians still believe they should not change them before Israel recognizes a Palestinian state.

Shafi is concerned that many of those who return from abroad may change their minds in favor of altering the charter when they see the new realities on the ground.

MALKI SAID he hopes that the return of PFLP leaders will bring new life to the PFLP and increase its influence.

However, this is not enough, he said, the party must make democratic changes, such as permitting freedom of expression and collective decision making.

Malki said he foresees PFLP elections, starting with elections for local leaders. The Palestinian elections have triggered a revolt among local activists from all of the Palestinian parties, Malki said.

"The people have tasted some democracy and now expect changes in their own parties," he explained. He also predicted that many dissat-

isfied members of all groups will split away to form new parties. He said that since the PFLP had always complained about the PLO's lack of democracy, it must open itself to more flexibility and democracy.

He termed the decision by the PFLP leaders in Damascus to boycott the elections "a mistake." The high voter turnout and the results only showed the boycotters, lessening influence.

The boycott especially hurt the secular opposition groups, he said, and their best option now is to form lobby groups to influence the Palestinian council's legislation.

Malki said the last meeting of the PFLP's central committee in Damascus authorized the party politburo to establish contacts with the PA. He said it is still too early to say what kind of relationship that would be or whether the party would accept council legislation.

Like Hamas, the PFLP will run in municipal elections, which Malki said he considers "a new chance for the opposition to regain some of its influence among the people."

Saudis hold Riyadh bomb suspect

News agencies

Authorities this week confirmed they had taken custody of a Saudi Arabian man deported from Pakistan in connection with a deadly car-bombing in Riyadh last year that killed five Americans and two Indians.

Hassan Alsarai, a Saudi citizen living in Pakistan since 1990, faces an almost certain sentence of beheading by sword if convicted of involvement in the bombing.

It is unclear what role Alsarai is suspected of playing in the bombing. He was arrested earlier in the week by Pakistani federal agents acting on leads provided by Saudi security, a Pakistani Interior Ministry spokesman said in Islamabad.

The state-run Saudi Press Agency quoted an unnamed Interior Ministry source as saying the suspect has been handed over to Saudi authorities.

"He said this was in the framework of long-standing 'security cooperation' between the two countries."

Pakistan said it had deported Alsarai last Thursday, but Saudi authorities did not comment on the case until after the Moslem weekend.

After the November 13 blast, Saudi authorities released a sketch of a mustachioed suspect who was seen by a witness minutes before the blast. It is not clear whether Alsarai fits that description.

The three-story building targeted was the headquarters for a US Army program that provides American military and civilian advisers to help train the Saudi Arabian National Guard.

There has been no word on the affiliation of those responsible for the blast. Suspicion has focused on Saudi dissidents frustrated with the government's heavy-handed policies toward its critics, or Moslem fundamentalists seeking to drive American forces out of the Gulf.

Agents from Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency traced Alsarai through immigration records in the central Pakistani city of Lahore. Last month, Pakistani Interior Minister Nasrullah Babar met with Saudi officials to discuss the case. Pakistani reports quoted officials as saying Alsarai fought in Afghanistan during the early 1990s and has also supported Islamic militants in the disputed Kashmir region.

Thousands of suspected Islamic militants from the Middle East flooded into Pakistan during the 1980s to fight with Afghan rebels against Soviet occupying forces in neighboring Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, King Fahd this week donated \$2.6 million dollars to a royal-sponsored fund that provides humanitarian aid to Moslems in Bosnia, the official Saudi Press Agency reported.



Syrian President Hafez Assad, left, during his meeting with US Secretary of State Warren Christopher, right, at the presidential palace in Damascus yesterday. Christopher said in Israel Monday that the Clinton administration will keep pushing for a peace settlement, even if Israel holds early elections. (AP)

New Jordanian government sworn in; King visits Fahd

King Hussein of Jordan will make his long-awaited visit to Saudi Arabia on Sunday to end the rift caused by the 1990-91 Gulf crisis, officials said this week.

He is expected to meet King Fahd and his half-brother, Crown Prince Abdullah, who is running the kingdom's day-to-day business while the Saudi monarch recuperates from a stroke suffered in November, they said.

The visit demonstrates the dramatic improvement in ties since the countries split over Jordan's sympathy for Baghdad when it invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

During his visit, King Hussein will perform the holy Muslim pilgrimage in the city of Mecca.

Two years ago, King Fahd snubbed a courtesy call from King Hussein while he performed the same pilgrimage.

The trip was agreed upon in principle during a visit last month by Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal.

A meeting between King Hussein and King Fahd planned for early December was postponed after King Fahd fell ill.

IN JORDAN, many fresh faces were added to key ministries this week when the king swore in a new government headed by Prime Minister Abdul-Karim al-Kabariiti.

At least eight of the 31 ministers in the new government, mostly the economic team, had served in the outgoing government of prime minister Sharif

Zeid Bin Shaker in which Kabariiti, 46, was foreign minister.

Key posts went to new faces: Marwan Awad, general manager of the Middle East Investment Bank, became finance minister; Marwan Muasher, ambassador to Israel and former spokesman for Jordan's peace delegation, became information minister.

Kabariiti, also defense minister, retained the foreign ministry - reflecting his determination to supervise policies as the Middle East moves closer to peace. A minister of state for foreign affairs was named to run day-to-day matters.

Twenty-one ministers are lower house of parliament members, ensuring a solid parliamentary base for a vote of confidence.

The appointment of popular lawmaker Awad Khleifat underlined the king's determination to press ahead with a seven-year-old liberalization process.

The king named a moderate and popular security official to head the largely feared General Intelligence Department.

The appointment of Maj.-Gen. Sameeh Batikhi underlined the monarch's intention to change

the image of his security apparatus, which has been widely accused of breaching human rights.

Batikhi, in his early 50s, succeeds Gen. Mustafa Qeisi, who was appointed the king's national security advisor.

The announcement carried by state-run Jordan Television said Qeisi, 58, who took over the intelligence department in 1989,

will also head a new council that will supervise national security matters.

In a letter to Batikhi read on TV, King Hussein told him that he was keen to "develop and modernize" the intelligence department "so that it can carry out its big responsibilities toward the security of this nation."

(News Agencies)

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The Blich bellwether

LABOR'S victory in the mock elections at Blich High School in Ramat Gan was a landslide, a crushing personal defeat for Likud chairman Biyamin Netanyahu and a rebuff for his party. Because in the past this school has proved a reliable bellwether, a barometer of the country's mood forecasting the results of the real elections, politicians consider the Blich vote a test of major importance.

But whether the Blich pupils prove prescient this time around is less pertinent to the country's future than some of the manifestations accompanying the mock elections in this and other schools.

More than in previous years, the least attractive and often objectionable elements of American electioneering seemed to dominate the campaign. The mock race brought to mind President Ezer Weizman's warning against Israeli youth imitating the vulgarities of popular American culture.

Most disturbing in the campaign was the politicization of popular singers, a phenomenon familiar to those who remember the anti-Vietnam war protests in the US. At that time, rock and folk artists carried a message of peace which proved irresistible to the multitudes of teenagers about to be drafted. The hysteria generated by these singers seemed to replace

reason. Regardless of the merit of the case - it is entirely possible that American involvement in Vietnam was a mistake - an appeal to herd instincts is the antithesis of what elections in democracies should represent. It mocks the faith the democratic system puts in individual judgment - a judgment despised and derided by dictatorial regimes - and glorifies blind, rapacious trust in mindless slogans.

No one represents this phenomenon more than singer Aviv Gefen. To see his impact on audiences at rock concerts is one thing. To witness his participation in election campaigns, eliciting an uncontrollable, reflexive response to his calls for "peace" and "a better world for young people" from an audience intoxicated to the point of senselessness by his presence is to view anti-democracy at work.

Israeli teenagers have always been known for a seriousness that set them apart from their counterparts in most other countries. Some may view their "Americanization" (a term which may be unfair to Americans) as an indication of normalization, an inevitable part of the advent of peace. Others may wonder if the country is truly so secure that it can afford such a suspension of reasoned discourse by the best and brightest among its young.

Paper-thin Dayton

ANY American casualty in foreign military operations now tends to swamp the media, and so it has been with the tragic death of Sgt. Donald Allen Dugan, killed by a mine in Bosnia. The publicity is justified, but must not be allowed to overshadow the fact that in a peacekeeping operation only six weeks old, 10 NATO soldiers have already died and 46 have been hurt.

Undoubtedly the military will learn lessons from the casualties as time goes on, but if it comes to expertise, it is surely the combatants in Bosnia who are the experts at chipping away international morale - as they did so effectively with the United Nations. Despite the casualties, however, a verdict of "so far, so good," can be delivered on the NATO-forced implementation of the Dayton peace agreement, meant to halt the conflict and reunite Bosnia. But the signs remain ominous that things could get worse far more quickly than they get better. The accord remains paper-thin.

While most of the NATO casualties have been isolated mine incidents, several soldiers have also been wounded by sniper fire - a sure sign that there are plenty of people in Bosnia willing to take pot-shots at the peacekeepers if they think they can get away with it. It would take only one "lucky" strike from a rogue mortar or terrorist car bomb to propel NATO into crisis - especially if American troops were targeted while the US election campaign is in full swing.

NATO is not the UN, and its overwhelming military superiority is beyond doubt. The fierce NATO air blitz of last year that decimated the Serb military machine also drummed home the lesson that the alliance can and will act when it has to. Yet NATO is not in Bosnia to fight a war, but to stop one, and the civilian aspects of the peacekeeping operation are likely to become

more important than the military ones. This is unknown territory for NATO, and the past history of military units negotiating political, humanitarian and judicial minefields is not encouraging. It simply is not a job for which armies and air forces are assembled.

The combatants may be forced to submit to NATO's superiority, but the civilian backup for the peace-enforcing is feeble at best, leaving the field open for those devious maneuvers at which political leaders in the former Yugoslavia are so adept. The civilian aspect of Dayton rests in the hands of the international community's so-called High Representative, Carl Bildt of Sweden. His team's efforts, so far, fail to impress. Bildt was slow to get started as NATO moved in, and has quickly become entangled in the webs of Balkan intrigue.

It is not as if the High Representative has to formulate a policy. Policy is already spelled out in the Dayton Accord, and Bildt is required to implement it forcefully. For example, the accord orders the Sarajevo suburbs to be transferred to the Moslem-Croat federation. Bildt's office has become mired in the games of the hard-line Serb commanders, who never accepted the Dayton provisions negotiated for them by Serbia proper, and are determined to retain control of the suburbs. In other areas, refugees are being prevented from returning to their homes by unrepentant civilian and militia warmongers. No effort has been made to unravel the probably horrific fate of thousands of missing Moslems at Serb hands.

The UN civilian and humanitarian effort in Bosnia during the war has won fully deserved praise, while the UN military became a laughing stock. NATO had better be careful that its firm military operation is not unraveled by the incompetence and weakness of its civilian and political backup.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

UNIVERSITY LECTURES

Sir, - Regarding the letter of January 22 by Chani Kreisel criticizing the Hebrew University of Jerusalem for scheduling its lecture series on Jerusalem on Saturday mornings, there are certain points which require clarification.

This series of lectures was planned to enhance the Jerusalem 3000 celebration by offering tourists and others an opportunity to hear talks on the history and heritage of Jerusalem in English from some of the top scholars of the university. Full consideration was taken of religious observance, including the time (11 a.m.), so as not to conflict with morning Sabbath services, and the central location (the King David Hotel), enabling people who are staying at hotels in central Jerusalem to walk to the lectures. Indeed, a large segment of those attending the first lecture were Sabbath-observant people.

Obviously, it is not possible for everyone to come and hear these lectures. The main objective was to try and reach the maximum number of people at a time when they are not busy with sightseeing or other activities. For those who are year-round residents of Israel, the university offers scores of weekday lectures, conferences and concerts, mostly free of charge, to which the public is invited and which are publicized in *The Jerusalem Post* through advertisements and the listings of events.

RAKETFET MOSSEK
Spokesperson
Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Jerusalem.

WHO'S A JEW

Sir, - A.B. Yehoshua, in his speech to the World Jewish Congress said that "a Jew is someone who defines himself as such" (January 24). He later said that any Jew should be allowed to come to Israel.

If one follows Yehoshua's logic, anyone who defines himself as a Jew should be allowed to come to Israel. Does he advocate that we keep this policy a secret? We had better not publicize it, or we will have entire populations of the world's poorer countries suddenly defining themselves as Jewish and making aliya en masse.

If A.B. Yehoshua is one of Israel's leading intellectual lights, judging by this speech, we are in real trouble.

ELIYAHU SHIFFMAN
Beit Shemesh.

MOVIES FOR CHILDREN

Sir, - According to Adina Hoffman's Cinema Briefs, *The Usual Suspects* has "children under 17 admitted only accompanied by an adult" - and very rightly so.

However, I suspect the cashier welcomes any income, especially for the afternoon shows, since when I went to see the movie recently, the whole row behind me was taken up by kids between 10 and 14 years of age and not an adult in sight.

If gruesomely detailed manslaughter on wide screen is not deemed suitable for a tender age, then make sure that this wise law is strictly kept.

C. KLOETZEL
Jerusalem.

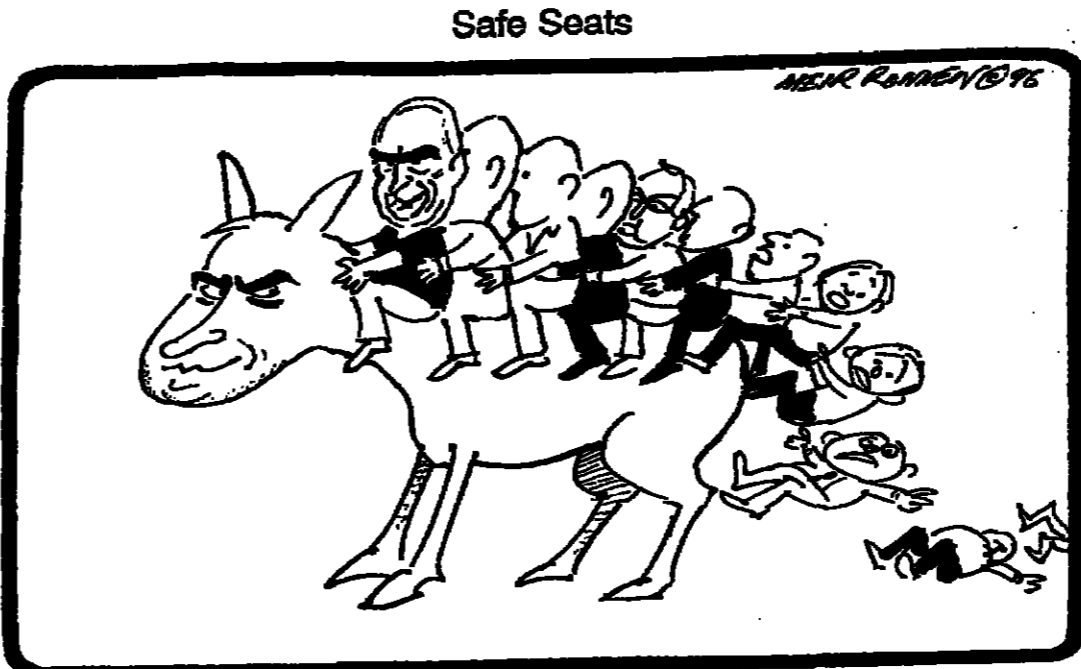
TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE

Sir, - Harvey Meirovitch's vision of Judaism and the destiny of Israel ("A world in a single life," January 23) seems to lack basic Jewish values. He derides the "religious right's" concept that ultimately territorial dimensions may be worth the sacrifice of one's life. Yet doesn't every nation find it worthy to fight to defend its territories? If Meirovitch is sincerely against the sacrifice of Jewish lives for any territories, let him clearly say that he will be just as willing to surrender the whole state of Israel if that saves lives, as he is willing to surrender Hebron and Jerusalem.

He speaks about the lack of respect for a "balanced Judaism" among the religious right. He contends that Judaism's great teachers had expertise in "juggling polar opposition with finesse." I assure you, rabbi, that never in the history of the people of Israel had Judaism's great teachers struggled with a Knesset whose decisions of *pituah nefesh* (life or death) have been decided by votes of gentiles.

I therefore ask the rabbi to rethink his statement that "it is unquestionably the right of the Labor-led government to believe that the threat of war will be substantially decreased through territorial compromise." Those of us on the religious right understand that the gentile has no right to determine our destiny in our country Israel.

MOSHE BERG
Jerusalem.



Meddler for the cause

Foreign authorities will deny involvement in Israel's internal turmoil during elections due this summer, as they have done in previous elections. But this time round, there seems to be more external involvement in our elections.

In the past, foreign countries bestowed aid or withheld guarantees prior to elections as a way of recommending candidates they favored to the Israeli voter. This time they seem to be more aggressive ambassadors, with a rather unorthodox involvement on behalf of those they want to see in power.

Only Syria's Hafez Assad has refrained from placing any bets on the Israeli elections. Assad isn't ready for the meeting Shimon Peres is hoping for - a meeting Peres believes could raise his stock in the elections. Assad, a suspicious man, is still looking for a guarantee that Peres will not exploit early elections to effect some kind of maneuver regarding the talks in Wye Plantation.

Arafat, on the other hand, favors early elections in Israel. He was deeply involved in our May 1992 elections, and (although he denies doing so) instructed Israeli Arabs how to vote.

In May 1996 Arafat will try to use our early elections to help him overcome his difficulties concerning two problems which are making him lose sleep: finding a solution to the problem of the Palestinian Covenant, and accommodation with Hamas regarding the duration of the cease-fire he agreed on.

The first problem is the promised deletion of the anti-Israel clauses in the Palestinian Covenant no later than two months after the elections for the Palestinian Authority council.

Since the elections were held on January 20, the date set for the amendment of the Palestinian Covenant is March 20, a rather

MOSHE ZAK

inconvenient date for Arafat. Why? Because Israel is liable to postpone its withdrawal from most of Hebron, if that date remains in effect - which is why Dr. Ahmed Tibi volunteered to pull Arafat's chestnuts out of the fire.

Tibi told the Israeli public, in Arafat's name, that the amendments in the covenant would be made before the Knesset elections. And Israelis, highly delighted by this new promise, didn't notice that it constitutes yet another postponement of the obligation which should have

Arafat is busy exploiting Israel's early elections

been carried out immediately after Yitzhak Rabin and Arafat signed the Declaration of Principles in September 1993.

Instead of linking the date for the annulment of the anti-Israel clauses to the Palestinian elections, Tibi now has tied the PNC's decision on the covenant to the Israel elections. And no one has thought to ask the doctor/Arafat adviser this question: Where's the connection between Israeli elections and the debate on the Palestinian Covenant?

This ploy of Tibi's demonstrates considerable political acumen. On the eve of elections, Prime Minister Peres won't have much choice but to welcome any decision the PNC makes - even if it amounts to an evasion of the PLO's commitment to annul those clauses in the Palestinian Covenant calling for Israel's destruction.

Arafat is assuming that just prior to elections, Peres will not

be able to allow himself the appearance of having failed in the Oslo agreements. If the elections were being held later, in October, he would leave himself a space of several months to put pressure on Arafat. Not so if the elections are in May. To forestall opposition criticism, the government will have to say amen to any evasive Arafat semantics.

THE SECOND issue on which early elections can benefit Arafat is a reduction in the lull in Palestinian terrorist activities, settled in an understanding between the PA and Hamas.

It is hard for Arafat to restrain the avengers in Hamas, the Islamic Jihad and the other rejectionist groups. Arafat clinched the cease-fire with Hamas on the "patriotic" grounds that Israel could well delay the IDF's withdrawal from most of Hebron and the rural areas in response to a murderous attack which shocked Israelis.

Arafat assumes that he can "stretch out" the cease-fire until the Knesset elections, so as not to interfere with the election of a prime minister who raises funds for him all over the world. But grassroots Palestinian pressure is getting stronger all the time, and Arafat is very happy that elections in Israel could cut short the cease-fire period.

This is the source of Arafat's satisfaction with Tibi's stratagem. The good doctor has anesthetized Israelis so well as to make them overlook the blocking maneuver in the matter of the promised amendments to the covenant. Israeli politicians won't grasp this tomorrow, or the day after. In their rush toward the primaries and the ballot box, they haven't any time to think.

The writer, a veteran journalist, comments on current affairs.

Growing up fit and strong

DAVID NEWMAN

Five years ago, I wrote a piece for the newsletter of the Israel Geographical Association on the subject of post-Zionist landscapes.

I argued that we were moving into a post-Zionist settlement landscape.

Kibbutzim and moshavim were undergoing (and continue to undergo) a great deal of internal transformation.

From the original notion of agricultural collectives, they were becoming middle-class industrial and tertiary communities. New settlements, established throughout the 1970s and 1980s, were dormitory communities, known in Israel as *yishuvim kehilati'im*, in which the residents purchased a plot of land, constructed their detached, low-density, housing unit, and commuted to their previous places of employment in the major metropolitan centers of Haifa, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

The "post-Zionist" discourse has come about partially as a result of the parallel debates which have been going on around concepts of post-modernism during the past five years.

To be "post" is to be "in." For us to reject and negate the many theories and models of human behavior that social scientists have set up for themselves over the past century is considered innovative and revolutionary.

But human behavior is too complex to fit into an ordered and progressive framework. Rather, as post-modernists themselves might argue, it's more a case of "a bit of everything and a bit of nothing."

It may not quite be anarchy, but it does allow the mind to roam without being constrained by any specific dogma which obligates us to think and rationalize in a given way. Until, of course, post-modernism becomes (as it already largely has) the new dogma without which we are simply not part of the ongoing battle for the minds and ideas of future generations.

Needless to say, I was subjected to some strong criticism over my use of such terminology. Some of my colleagues responded by refuting the concept of a post-Zionist landscape.

The theme that emerged from these responses was that change in society does not necessarily

mean a total refutation of the ideological underpinnings of society itself.

Yes, my colleagues argued, it was true that the whole nature of settlement policy and planning was undergoing transformation. But this reflected the move away from the dominance of a particular socialist Zionist ideology to one which was more diverse and varied, which reflected the nature of a Western society in the latter part of the 20th century.

Clearly, such a society would be influenced by normal economic processes of suburbanization, a search for a better quality of life outside the overcrowded and polluted urban centers, and a desire

It is change which ensures continuity of the Zionist dream

to live a "normal" middle-class life within the Jewish homeland.

WHY SHOULD it be any different in Israel from anywhere else in the Western world? After all, it is precisely this form of "normalcy" to which the Zionist founders and pioneers aspired, but which was not realized in their lifetime.

"Post-Zionism" can be interpreted as characterizing the changing nature of Israeli society - a nature that is adaptive to change and understands the need to shed its over-reliance on some of its unique characteristics, many of which often constrained

POSTSCRIPT

AS A FIRE killed his sister and cousin, Kenneth James was robbing the home of next-door neighbors who were trying to save them.

When the James house in Philadelphia erupted in flames, Don and Cynthia Stephens ran to help.

"I don't regret at all trying to help them," Mrs. Stephens said. "I'm just sorry he didn't think enough of his little sister and his

socioeconomic development, in an effort to become an equal partner within the changing international arena.

Zionism was - and remains - about the creation of a state, a Jewish homeland, which would take a leading role in its people's health, welfare, industry and social development.

Zionism was not about creating a state which would always be portrayed as a social misfit, requiring the pity and assistance of the international community. Nor was it always meant to remain a society of agricultural pioneers.

Each generation of Israelis have to adapt to the social and economic aspirations and constraints of the specific period within which it lives.

We should not confuse the concepts of change and continuity. Change does not mean that there is no continuity. It is change itself which ensures continuity of the Zionist dream - the formation of a healthy and strong society.

The post-Zionist era represents the continued fulfillment of the Zionist dream. This includes the signing of peace agreements with Israel's neighbors and antagonists, since without peace we will continue to live in an abnormal situation, one in which all major issues of social and political concern within the country are pushed aside as we deal with the existential threat facing the state.

The writer teaches in the Department of Geography and Environmental Development and is Director of the Humphrey Centre for Social Policy at Ben Gurion University of the Negev.

Weak link

JOYCE SHIRA STARR

A team of MIT economists who claimed that there is sufficient water potential for Israel and its Palestinian neighbors for the next 20 years failed to account for the weakest link in the chain.

They took no note of the inevitable dry cycles that affect this region and can last for many years - plus the constant growth in population.

They also failed to account for water required to continue agriculture in Israel and the territories.

According to former Israeli water commissioner Meir Ben-Meir, one can only speak about the average "potential" as long as the largest consumer of fresh water is agriculture, i.e., as long as there is a large consumer whose allocation can be cut in the event of a climatic crisis.

Simulations conducted over the last 46 years demonstrate that the water "potential" or "balance" between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean is 1.8 or 1.9 billion cubic meters (bcm). The amount available in storage in the drought year of 1991, however, was only 1 bcm.

In 1991, the share of water delivered to Israeli agriculture was reduced by 50 percent, diverting water from the "flexible" to the "rigid" consumer. In that year, the population between the Jordan and the Mediterranean was 7 million people, approximately five million within the Green Line, and two million in the West Bank and Gaza.

Let us assume that the annual population growth rate of the area continues at 3 percent, including Jewish immigration to Israel. Based on this scenario, there will be approximately 11 million people living between the Jordan and the Mediterranean by 2015.

The standard of living among Palestinians will increase over the intervening years, with a direct influence on water consumption.

Enough water for Israelis and Palestinians for the next 20 years? Likely not

Employing every method possible to reduce consumption, Israel's 100 cubic meters per capita has already reached the bottom line.

Water-stressed Californians, for example, draw 220 cm. of water per capita. Palestinians in the territories presently use only 30 cubic meters. Many households still do not have access to the water system, and the standard of living remains low.

Let us imagine that suddenly, in 2015, with the population at 11 million and water for drinking purposes equalized between Israel and the Palestinians, the region confronts another climatic crisis - hardly a far-fetched assumption given the cyclical drought conditions of the region.

Every four to five years, the Middle East suffers a one-to-three-year drought period. This is common to all subtropical areas of the world.

Having eliminated agriculture as the flexible consumer, the water potential will be equal to the amount available that year - i.e., the amount available to the rigid consumer.

The 2015 water deficit, according to this scenario, will be half a billion cubic meters.

In a normal year, with 1.8 bcm of available water, there is a sufficient quantity of drinking water for 18 million people. But strategic planners must take the worst-case analysis into consideration.

AT THE appointed time, when the urban sector demands the total amount of fresh water, the quantity in Israel's storage capacity will be the potential water available to the consumer in any given year.

Since the flexible user, (the agricultural sector), no longer exists, clearly at this moment the potential also ceases to exist.

Thus, when the population reaches 11 million, with the per-capita urban consumption of water by the Palestinians equal to the per-capita urban consumption of Israelis - precisely within the coming two decades - Israel will be exploiting the total amount of water at its disposal.

At this juncture, with another dry cycle reducing the available common resources to 1.1 bcm. (per-capita use at 100 cm.), Israel and the Palestinians will have exploited their last drop of fresh water.

The writer, author of *Covenant Over Middle Eastern Waters: Key to World Survival*, is senior associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, D.C.

Sense of belonging eases those transitions

RUTH MASON
PARENTING

How can I ease transitions for my six-year-old? Getting out of the house in the morning or leaving a friend's house is always very difficult for him. He resists, I get mad, and then there's a scene. How can I avoid this cycle?

Efra Tenenbaum, Adlerian parenting group leader, replies: Belonging is the central concept around which the Adlerian approach to child rearing is built. In order to feel good, a child needs to feel that he has a place in the family. We believe that when a child isn't so sure of his place in the family (and this could be a completely subjective feeling), he directs all of his energy to finding his place and has less internal energy for other life tasks.

When his energy is thus focused, he is less flexible and it becomes harder for him to make the transition from one situation to another. It might be worthwhile to think about the problem in this context.

Be aware, too, that he is most likely behaving in a difficult way not because he wants to but because it really is hard for him to move from one situation to another. It sometimes takes a while for things to warm up at a friend's house and just when they do, he has to leave. Or, perhaps, this is his way of getting your attention at that moment.

Another central Adlerian idea is to look at children's behavior in terms of what they are getting out of their actions. We don't ask, "Why?" we ask, "What for?" Try to look at the situation in this way. What is your child

getting out of this behavior? Extra attention? Bribes? If so, maybe you can alter your response.

It is also important to realize that children as well as adults operate according to different internal clocks and different temperaments. It is easier for some people to adjust to changes than for others. Try to figure out in what situations you can adjust yourself to your child's pace and temperament.

In the morning, when you have to get to work and school, your pace must dictate. But see if you can let your child do things at his own pace at other times.

It is a good idea to prepare your child for a transition. You can say, "We're going soon, I'll tell you 10 minutes before we have to leave." This respects the needs and pace of the child and also those of the parents.

If you are at a friend's house, you can say, "We have to go soon; let's try to leave in a way that will be pleasant for all of us. If you make a fuss, next time, we won't be able to come. We'll wait until you're ready to be able to leave without a fuss."

If that doesn't work, the next time he wants to visit that friend, say, "I know you want to go to Irit's house today, but we can't go because I just can't put up with these fights."

Make sure you say this in a friendly way. You're on his side. This is not a punishment, but a consequence of his behavior.

If you have a question about parenting, write to: Parenting, POB 81, 91000 Jerusalem.

What once was considered a biblical prohibition is now a more acceptable form of esthetic expression, Douglas Danoff writes

He weighed in his mind the countervailing images: that of his parents warning him of the biblical proscription against body marking and that of a dinosaur tattoo.

Without much hesitation, he opted for the dinosaur.

With increasing frequency, Jews are making the same choice as Wayne Brachman, a pastry chef and cookbook author in New York, and ending up at the tip of tattoo artists' needles. The depictions range from the sail-backed dromedary Brachman chose to one woman's giant octopus. Reportedly, they also include a forearm tattoo of the subject's murdered grandmother's concentration-camp number.

As for any reservations he might have had about getting a tattoo, Brachman says his concerns related more to friends' cautionary tales than to biblical prohibitions.

"For years and years, people have said 'You'll hit 40 and you'll really regret it,'" Brachman recalls. "Well, I hit 40, and I realized the main reason why I didn't have a tattoo was that people had always convinced me to put it off, so I got my first tattoo as I officially hit middle age."

The scriptural prohibition of tattooing states: "Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor imprint any marks upon you." (Leviticus 19:28)

According to Rabbi Steven Dworken of the Rabbinical Council of America, a branch of the Union of Orthodox Jewish

Congregations of America, cutting and marking were first deemed impermissible because they represented forms of pagan idolatry. Although many Jews believe that those who get tattoos cannot be buried in a Jewish cemetery, Dworken assures, "It's just an old *bubbe's* tale."

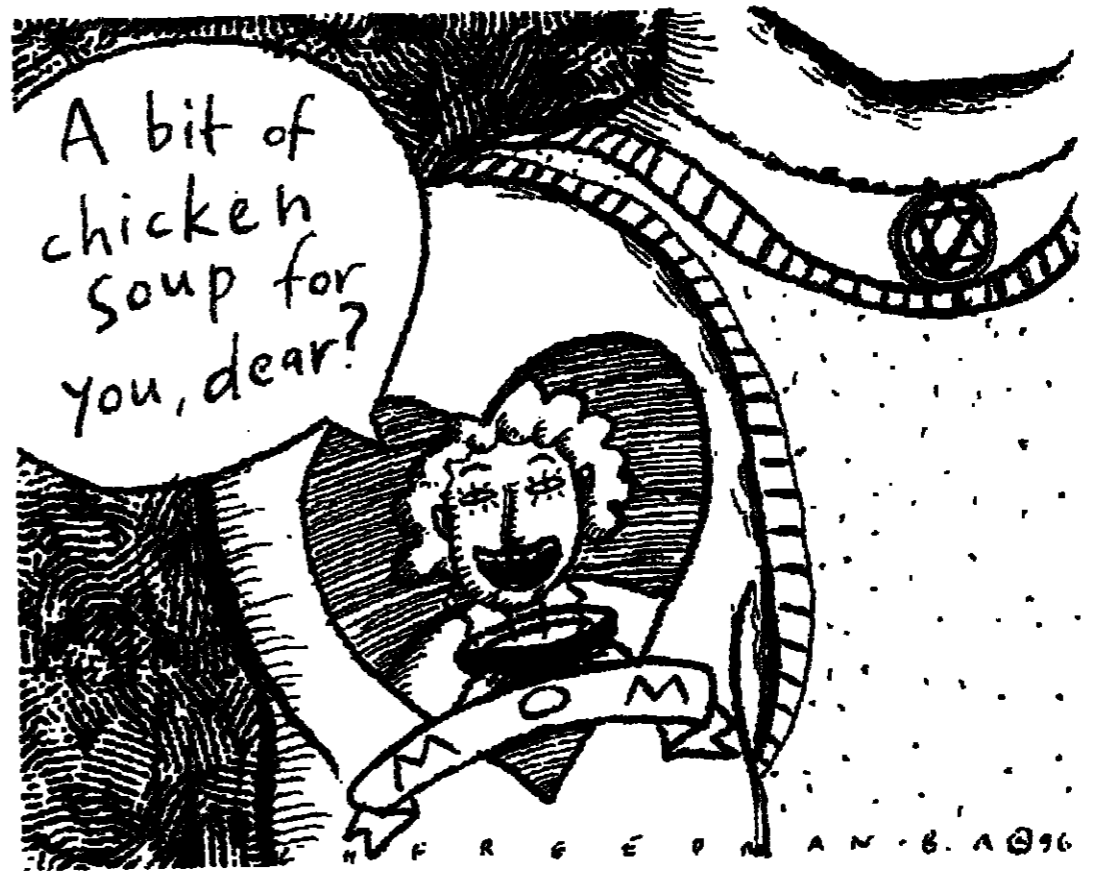
Some tattooed Jews, however, complain this interpretation of the law is hypocritical, asking why cosmetic surgery is deemed acceptable.

"What about all the Jewish women who get nose jobs and face lifts?" asks Larry Alpert, who studied at a yeshiva for six years. "The whole thing is about changing your body, but where do you draw the line? Do you draw it at tummy tucks?"

For many Jews, how to break the news to mom and dad looms as the biggest obstacle to getting a tattoo. Caroline Sommers had always wanted a tattoo but didn't think she would be able to explain it to her parents. Then, one day when she went out to eat, her waitress happened to mention her father and brother were tattoo artists.

Later in the meal, Sommers and her friend learned that the waitress was Jewish, and "a light bulb went off in our heads," Sommers remembers. "We had an automatic way to explain this to our mothers: the guy who did the tattoo was Jewish."

Although Sommers's revelation to her parents went smoothly enough, controversy still follows her. At a recent wedding, her



shoulder tattoos received mixed reviews.

"One Jewish woman said, 'I wish I had the nerve to do that.' Another licked her fingers, rubbed one of my tattoos, and asked, 'Is this removable?'"

A reaction of incredulity is common, particularly from those who lived through the Third Reich.

"I was doing a wedding with a senior colleague of mine," Dworken recounts, "and the young lady had a tattoo, a little rose, on her arm... and the rabbi, who was European, said to me, 'Was she in the Holocaust?' He couldn't imagine anybody voluntarily doing that to herself."

Some, like Jarett Saul, a singer in the alternative rock band Mother Mary, believe, "It's about taking control over your body."

Saul has chosen to take control over his body by getting a tattoo of a 4-cm-wide trellised arm-band.

Diana Fox finds this view outrageous. "For me as a Jew, because of the concentration camps, the idea of tattooing is associated with people compromising the integrity of my body," she said. "On the other hand, I sometimes fantasize about getting a tattoo that no one can see, except under lack light - an invisible tattoo - in the same kind of typeface as the concentration-camp numbers, maybe with 'six million.'"

Jane Caplan, a history professor at Bryn Mawr College, specializes in the history of Nazi Germany, but is currently doing research on tattooing and other marks of identity in 19th-century Europe.

Caplan, whose grandfather was a rabbi in Blackpool, England, is adorned with two tattoos. She believes that tattooing is experiencing a moment of cultural expansion, as it did about a hundred years ago.

"It is having a burst of being regarded as interestingly eccentric, as opposed to entirely deviant," she observes.

Tattooing appears to have become increasingly appealing for those who feel awash and impotent; if they cannot control the world, they can, as Saul said, control their bodies.

With greater acceptability in certain circles, tattooing has been downgraded from a biblical abomination to a mere aesthetic judgment.

Western Canada's agitator for autonomy

Which Canadian province long ago proclaimed itself a distinct society and struggles still to free itself from the yoke of the Canadian federation and take charge of its historic domain? The obvious answer is Quebec.

But there is another, equally correct answer: British Columbia. Quebec's drive toward sovereignty, for all the anger and anguish it stirs across the rest of Canada, has brought to the surface a latent and potentially compatible independent streak among Canada's Pacific coast citizens.

"If you scratch the surface of public opinion in British Columbia," said David Mitchell, the only independent member of the province's legislature, "you'll be surprised to find a lively secessionist spirit here."

In a recent poll, he noted, a remarkable 12 percent of British Columbians said the province could go it alone if it had to - that is, if Quebec were to renege the federation.

Those sentiments, according to University of Victoria political scientist Norman Ruff, "speak to a certain amount of self-confidence that if the country was to break up, it wouldn't mean the end for British Columbia. It could be a viable entity on its own."

British Columbians have reason to feel bold about their future. The province is Canada's third largest, its fastest growing and its most robust economically.

British Columbia exports less to the rest of Canada and the US than any other province. More and more of its markets are offshore, and its burgeoning Asian-immi-

grant population has brought in capital and labor and solidified Vancouver's traditional links to the Pacific Rim.

After the traumatizing Quebec referendum last October, in which sovereignty for the largely French speaking province was defeated by a single percentage point, British Columbia is coming into its own as a powerful player in the next round of the Canadian unity debate.

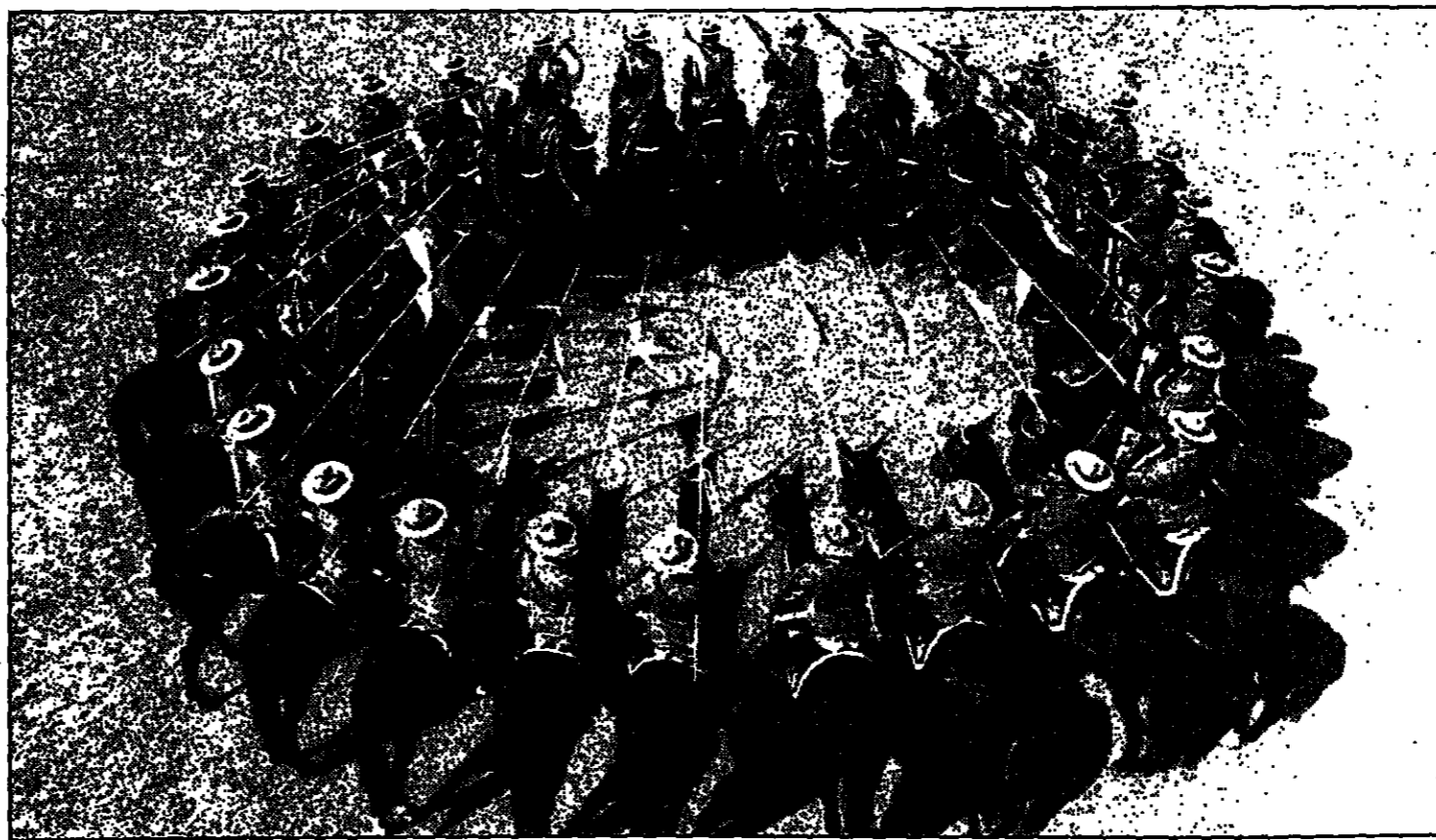
British Columbia is likely to bring an agenda of increased autonomy within the Canadian federation and further devolution of powers to the provinces - potential solutions to British Columbia's grievances that could lead themselves to Quebec's.

Like other analysts of the Canadian political situation, Ruff sees a "paradoxical correspondence" between the aims of westerners who want the federal government in Ottawa to "download" powers to the already powerful Canadian provinces and Quebecers who want to wrest more if not all power from Ottawa.

Authority over labor training and immigration policy are at the top of the list in both Quebec and British Columbia.

Mitchell said he thinks British Columbia is undergoing its own "Quiet Revolution" akin to the one that convulsed Quebec society in the 1960s and set that province on its tortuous road to possible independence.

"We want to be masters in our house too," said Mitchell, echoing the slogan of the late Quebec separatist leader Rene Levesque, "Maitres chez nous."



If BC residents have their way, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police won't be standing on guard for them. (Canadian Government/Travis Bureau)

A looser confederation of more muscular regions, he noted, would be in keeping with a vision of the future favored by some Canadians, in which smaller units, such as Quebec or British Columbia, operate effectively in the global marketplace.

Furthermore, as the once lavish Canadian federal social service

system undergoes drastic retrenchment under the pressure of crippling government debt,

Canada, like the US, is finding devolution of powers - and thus financial burdens - a convenient

instrument of budget balancing. The possibility that Canada might withdraw from its role as

one of the world's best-known welfare states worries even those Canadians who argue that decentralization makes sense.

Poll after poll has shown that Canadians say the defining attributes of their national identity are their social service institutions, such as health care and unemployment insurance.

David Anderson, who represents Victoria, the provincial capital, in the federal Parliament and sits in Prime Minister Jean Chretien's cabinet, said in an interview that such go-it-alone thinking obscures the clout that the federal government brings to ensure British Columbia's prosperity - using a continental standing to settle the latest lumber dispute with the US, for example.

He also noted the advantages British Columbia, and the port of Vancouver especially, enjoy as Canada's gateway to Asia and the Pacific Rim.

Still, British Columbia, with a population of 3.8 million, always has been aloof and distinct and, unlike much of the rest of Canada, blessed by geography and climate.

British Columbia joined the federation in 1871, four years after the founding provinces, and until a few decades ago represented only a tiny fraction of the Canadian population - and, in its West Coast ways, is a cantankerous exception to most Canadian norms.

And I Shall Dwell Among Them
Historic Synagogues of the World
Photographs and commentary by Neil Folberg

For the last three years Neil Folberg, a former student of Ansel Adams, has travelled the world, visiting Jewish communities past and present and photographing both grand-scale and modest synagogues, in places ranging from India to the Czech Republic, to Israel, the American South and the Caribbean. An essay by Yom Tov Assis focuses on the social and cultural history of the Jews, and Neil Folberg's first-person account of his photographs accompanies each of the chapters, which are divided into geographic regions. A superb full color album, it provides a vibrant window onto the Jewish cultural past.

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by Norene Gilletz

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1996

Claridge-Arison said looking for new partners

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

THE Claridge-Arison consortium will next week contact potential foreign partners in order to replace two key members who are reportedly withdrawing, sources said yesterday.

US investment bank Goldman Sachs and New York-based financier George Soros are said to have informed Claridge and Ted Arison of their intended withdrawals from the consortium.

Soros's and Sachs's decision, which has yet to be officially confirmed, is due to several problems connected with Bank Hapoalim's business, primarily the bank's exposure to the kibbutzim - which restructured their debts with government support.

Jonathan Kolber, president of Claridge and one of the heads of the consortium, said the group's investors are evaluating their positions. The consortium is competing against the Fishman-Bear Stearns consortium to acquire 20% of the bank, representing Hapoalim's controlling core.

"The situation is in flux," Kolber said. "There is much self-examination and a closer look at the deal. It [withdrawals from the consortium], may happen and may not. Nobody knows."

Several weeks ago, the Claridge-Arison group reportedly submitted MI Holdings with a proposal to purchase 20% of Hapoalim for about \$300m.

The reports said the bank is valued below its shareholders' equity, due to the need to reduce non-financial holdings and the consortium's need to secure itself against the kibbutz debts.

Hotel rooms to triple, tourists to double by 2010

HAIM SHAPIRO

THE number of hotel rooms here will treble and the amount of tourists double by the year 2010, according to the multi-year Tourism Master Plan approved yesterday by the National Planning Council.

The plan must still be approved by the government, and the Treasury has not yet committed to paying NIS 400 million in investment incentives, compared to the current government investment of some NIS130m.

The plan was prepared jointly by the Tourism and Interior ministries, with the participation of representatives from various other ministries and organizations.

It provides for an increase in the number of hotel rooms from the current number of nearly 40,000 to more than 120,000, with plans for a series of resorts and vacation villages along the Mediterranean coastline and a massive development of hotels in the Dead Sea area.

Interior Minister Haim Ramon, who presented the plan with Tourism Minister Uzi Baram, said tourism was the industry of the future, not only for Israel, but the world.

Last year there were some 2.5 million tourists here, with each one spending about \$1,300. By 2010, Baram said there would be at least five million tourists annually and possibly far more.

"We still don't know exactly what the Vatican will do about the year 2000 [the millennium of Jesus's birth], or how Moslem tourism will react to peace," Baram said.

Tourism is a high-employment industry, Baram added, with opportunities for unskilled labor and groups such as new immigrants, recently demobilized soldiers and Israeli Arabs.

He stressed that the planners considered environmental factors and said in many cases tourism development actually served to preserve the environment.

The plan calls for considerable development of resort tourism, with hotels and vacation villages at or near such sites as Acre, Ashkelon, Ashdod and Haifa.

These, he said, would not only attract foreign tourists, but help contribute to internal tourism, with about 1.5 million Israelis vacationing here every year.

Tourism Minister Eli Gonen said the plan eliminated so-called apartment hotels, which in the past had been built as hotels with government aid, and then turned into quick profit as residences.

Time-sharing units would be limited to a week, and investors who wanted a hotel suite would have to turn it over to the management for at least 10 months a year, he said.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Citibank vice chairman William Rhodes met with the heads of the large commercial banks yesterday to discuss recent developments. Rhodes met with Bank Leumi's general manager Galia Maor and Leumi chairman Eitan Raff over breakfast and with Bank Hapoalim general manager Amiram Sivan for lunch. Rhodes, accompanied by several other senior Citibank officials, arrived in Israel on Monday for a two-day visit in order to announce the bank's establishment of a representative office here. *Galit Lipkis Beck*

Shekem has announced plans to invest \$10 million in Hyper Shekem stores this year. Two stores will open in Kiryat Motzkin this month, followed by another in Dimona. The first hyperstore opened in Ashkelon last August. Shekem also announced plans to invest NIS 35m. in renovating existing supermarkets and food stores in Kiryat Shmona, Hatzor Haglilit, Ashdod, Rehovot and Rishon LeZion. *Galit Lipkis Beck*

Sale of government's shares in Lapidot approved: The Knesset Finance Committee has approved the sale of the government's shares in Lapidot, an oil exploration company.

According to the deal approved yesterday by the committee, the government will sell its 58.9 percent stake in the company to Petrotrade Inc., owned by businessman Bruce Repaport, for NIS 25.9 million. *Evelyn Gordon*

The Mivtahim pension fund reported a NIS 4.2 billion profit last year. The fund's accumulated capital increased 13.8 percent to NIS 35b. from NIS 31.3b. in the same period last year. The fund has more than 400,000 members. *Galit Lipkis Beck*

Mutual fund assets fell to NIS 16.01 billion at the end of January from NIS 16.1b. in the corresponding period last year, the Meitav mutual fund consultancy firm reported yesterday. The drop was mainly due to NIS 197m. in mutual fund redemptions, mainly from the share funds. *Galit Lipkis Beck*

Tnuva Computers and Roni Waltman Engineers have merged to create Technosoft, a company specializing in management systems for large organizations. Tnuva Computers is a subsidiary of the dairy concern. *Rachel Neiman*

Wissotzky and Tetley tea company will develop an iced tea suited to local tastes. It will be launched here this summer, said Wissotzky's marketing director Romi Weinstein. Later it will be distributed in neighboring countries. *Rachel Neiman*

Jerusalem Global Consultants will manage the private placement of Jerusalem-based start-up Picture Vision. Four months ago JGC raised \$300,000 for Picture Vision in a private placement. *Rachel Neiman*

Israel Credit Lines Visa and the Chambers of Commerce have set up a joint club which will offer benefits and discounts to its members. Visa said it will issue members Gold and Gold Business credit cards free of charge during the first year. *Galit Lipkis Beck*

The BIRD Foundation has received a \$200,000 royalty check from US integrated circuit firm WSI and its Israeli subsidiary, following the completion of the development of a new programmable system device (PSD). The two companies were jointly awarded a BIRD Foundation grant to partially fund development. The new PSD has been chosen by AT&T, IBM, Canon, Mitsubishi, Sony, Siemens and General Electric. *Rachel Neiman*

MKs: Gov't blundered by submitting electricity bill too late

EVELYN GORDON

THE government seriously blundered by submitting a bill as important as the electricity bill only a month before it must be passed, the Knesset Economics Committee agreed yesterday.

The bill, submitted last week, must pass before the Israel Electric Corporation's franchise expires on March 1.

"The government played with the electricity bill for 3.5 years, but gave the Knesset a grace period of 13 [working] days to study the bill, acquire expertise in the complicated problems and decide," Patt said. "The government is irresponsibly expecting kid-glove treatment... on a matter which is one of the most important in the economy."

Avi Yehezkel (Labor) agreed with Patt that the bill should have been brought much earlier, adding that because of its bungling, the government now has a controversial bill discussed close to the primaries.

The committee was discussing a competing bill by Patt which would extend the IEC's franchise for another 18 months, in order to allow time for a proper reform bill to be passed.

Patt charged that the government bill, which would allow a maximum of 10 percent of all electricity to be produced by private companies, contradicts the recommendations of two public committees and an interministerial committee headed by the Treasury director-general.

Representatives of the Energy Ministry and IEC, however, asked the committee to support the government's bill instead.

IEC legal adviser Arye Nativ said the uncertainty over the company's fate is making it hard for it to raise much-needed capital overseas, and it therefore does not want the issue dragged out for another 18 months.

Workers' representatives also said they supported the government's bill, and did not want to reopen negotiations.

The committee did not vote on Patt's bill yesterday, since Patt said he sees no reason to rescue the government yet from what he said will be its failure to pass its own bill in time.



An elderly Ukrainian woman passes one of numerous currency exchange signs on a central street in Kiev yesterday as she heads for the market to sell potatoes. Many Ukrainians, especially pensioners, are suffering from a dramatic economic decline as the country struggles to implement market reforms. (Reuters)

Koor Ind. begins negotiations to invest in Vietnamese firms

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

KOOR Industries is in preliminary talks to invest in Vietnamese companies, Koor President and CEO Benjamin Gaon said yesterday at a meeting with Vietnamese President Vo Van Kiet in Hanoi.

Gaon said Koor has decided to place a stronger emphasis on its activities in Asia due to the area's economic potential.

He noted that Koor Trade's sales to Asia will grow by 50 percent this year to \$150 million, compared with \$100m. last year.

The companies with which Koor has started negotiations are in the food, telecommunications, construction and raw materials sectors.

Koor has offices in China, Hong Kong, Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Burma, Japan and Australia.

The Vietnamese president urged Koor to invest in industrial firms in the framework of the government's privatization plan.

He also called on Koor to help establish new companies in Vietnam using Koor's know-how.

Gaon is heading a delegation of Koor officials on an official tour of Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia and Burma.

The delegation also met with the ministers of finance, industry and trade, economics and the central bank governor.

The delegation includes Stanley Gold, Koor chairman of the board and president of the US Shamrock group; Yehuda Milo, deputy president and chief financial officer; Agan president Ian Levine; Tadiran president Israel Zamir; and Koor Trade president Ehud Penn.

Tambour in deal to buy Kedem Chemicals

RACHEL NEIMAN

TAMBOUR has announced it will pay \$14.32 million for a majority share of 59 percent outstanding capital share in Kedem Chemicals.

Kedem manufactures Fantastic products here.

The deal, due to be completed within 10 days, takes Tambour into another sphere of activity - producing chemicals for industry, agriculture and cleaning products for the home and institutional markets.

Tambour general manager Reuven Shulstein said the acquisition was part of an overall strategy to enter into new activities.

Tambour also has interests in water purification systems, printing inks, emulsions and glues, chemicals for treating metal and decorative bricks.

Kedem, formerly Kam Manufacturing, was founded in 1969 by Gedalia Doron. In 1980, the company was taken public and changed its name to Kedem. Ownership was divided between Doron (20.9%), Inon Kihiti (18.6%), Menahem Gurevitz (18.5%) and public shareholders (42.0%).

Kedem's net profits for the first nine months last year rose to NIS 4m. from NIS 2.24m. in 1994.

The company recently invested \$1.5m. in constructing a new manufacturing facility for Fantastic products, due to be completed in April. Kedem will also invest \$500,000 in new equipment for the company's Ashdod plant.

Oil prices stable as Iraq-UN talks start

LONDON (Reuters) - World oil markets were little changed yesterday as talks between Iraq and the United Nations on a UN plan allowing limited Iraqi oil sales began in New York.

Benchmark North Sea Brent blend futures for March delivery was up six cents at \$16.60 a barrel at the close of trading in London.

Abdul Amir Anbari, head of the Iraqi delegation to the talks on a UN oil-for-food plan, said a first round of technical talks could last seven to 10 days.

"These talks obviously have some way to go, so for the mo-

ment the market resembles the proverbial rabbit in front of the headlights," said an oil futures broker in London.

The talks' outcome, however, could send oil prices tumbling or climbing by \$1 a barrel, traders said. "If you get an agreement on a sale and no immediate OPEC meeting, then there could be a \$1.50-\$2.00 on the downside because people will be very nervous," said Jorge d'Almeida, futures trading manager at Elf Trading in Geneva.

Failure in New York would allow factors such as crude stocks

and high demand for heating oil to be reflected in short-term oil prices, traders said.

Iraq, under a UN ban, has been absent from world oil markets for five years since invading Kuwait, but has agreed to reconsider the UN plan which could result in an extra 750,000 barrels per day (bpd) of supplies.

Baghdad has rejected the terms of the plan because it includes strict UN monitoring over the distribution of humanitarian aid to the rebel Kurdish minority.

Meanwhile, OPEC's four-member ministerial quota com-

pliance committee will meet on March 4 in Vienna to discuss member countries' oil output performance, OPEC delegates said.

The committee, consisting of ministers from Nigeria, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates plus OPEC Secretary General Riwwan Lukman, will look into reports from selected secondary sources that OPEC is producing more than one million bpd over its official 24.52 million ceiling.

OPEC is especially keen to stem any leaks now that the talks are taking place between the UN and OPEC member Iraq.

Gates: Apple can recover from its losses

DAVOS, Switzerland (Reuters) - Microsoft Corp. Chairman Bill Gates said yesterday that troubled Apple Computer can still recover from its losses and tumbling market share.

"A near-death experience often revitalizes a company," Gates, said at the annual World Economic Forum summit of business and political leaders in this Swiss Alpine resort.

"There is still a chance for Apple."

Speaking at a panel discussion on new technologies, Gates said all hi-tech companies, including his own Microsoft, were vulnerable to collapse or shock from changes in technology or market demands.

"This is why we tell financial analysts to keep their expectations about Microsoft low. Our approach is to be very long-term," he

said.

Gates said Apple could do well again if given strong leadership.

Apple, once a powerful technological leader, ousted chief executive Michael Spindler last week and named turnaround specialist Gilbert Amelio to succeed him, as the company's profit margins and market share fell.

Gates noted that Microsoft's relations with Apple were traditionally close, as his group had long provided software for the computer makers.

"We're certainly going to pay a lot of attention to Apple as they pick their research and development course and see what we can do to support that," he said.

Gates said Apple's chief problem lay in

bringing new technology to the market too slowly for a voracious consumer demand for new features and greater capacity in personal computers.

"PCs will continue to get cheaper, and they will also continue to get more powerful," he said.

Gates said Apple's best opportunity would come from reviving its original track record as a technological innovator, offering personal computers that are easier to use.

"I think increasing the pace of engineering innovation is the direction that gives the most opportunity," he said.

"Today, all PCs are still too hard to use... There are opportunities for everybody who plays in the PC business."

ISRAELI MONEY MARKETS				
Patrah (foreign currency deposit rates) (7.2.96)				
Currency (deposit term)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	Rate
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.375	4.250	4.250	3.1250
Pound sterling (£100,000)	4.375	4.250	4.250	2.125
German mark (DM 200,000)	1.750	1.750	1.750	0.5125
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.500	0.500	0.500	2.5000
Yen (10 million yen)				0.875
(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)				
Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (6.2.96)				
CHECKS AND TRANSFERS				
Currency basket	Buy	Sell	Banknotes	Rate
U.S. dollar	3.2143	3.2710	Buy	3.2500
German mark	1.1079	1.1651	Sell	3.1250
French franc	4.7921	4.8929	Buy	2.125
Japanese yen (100)	0.0169	0.0229	Buy	4.8102
Dutch guilder	2.5642	2.6019	Buy	0.5125
Swiss franc	1.2607	1.2812	Sell	2.5000
Spanish peseta (100)	0.0439	0.0463	Buy	1.5021
Portuguese escudo	0.0044	0.0046	Buy	2.8117
Italian lira (1000)	0.0044	0.0046	Buy	0.4672
Irish pound	0.5974	0.6095	Buy	0.5809
British pound	0.9883	0.9995	Buy	0.8025
Australian dollar	2.2550	2.2927	Buy	2.2227
S. African rand	2.3903	2.3923	Buy	2.3923
Belgian franc (10)	0.0532	0.0570	Buy	0.0570
Austrian schilling (10)	1.0239	1.0465	Buy	1.0239
Indian Rupee (1000)	3.0113	3.0229	Buy	3.0229
Jordanian dinar	1.5748	2.0067	Buy	1.5748
Egyptian pound			Buy	4.3245
Israeli sheqel			Buy	0.9807
Yen pure	3.8773	3.9399	Buy	3.8000
Spanish peseta (100)	4.2518	5.0114	Buy	4.2518
	2.5078	2.5493	Buy	2.5078
* These rates vary according to bank. ** Bank of Israel.				
SOURCE: BANK LEUMI				

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All you want to know about your accounts, on your fax, within 15 minutes.

15 minutes and you're gone...

ISRAEL DISCOUNT BANK

Key Representative Rates
US dollar NIS 4.1200 -0.15%
Sterling NIS 4.6102 -0.35%
Mark NIS 2.1207 +0.24%

NEW YORK STOCK MARKETS

New York market indexes
DJ Industrial 4520.25 +51.28
DJ 300 4921.15 +40.20
NYSE Index 7782.25 +40.00

Other stock market indexes
FTSE 100 2747.5 -0.9
Nikkei 21911.48 +10.8

ISRAELI STOCKS IN NY

NYSE / AMEX
Amit 4.75 +0.12
Amit 10 7.15 +0.15
Amit 20 11.25 +0.20

INFLATION MARKETS

Dollar crossrates (US)
Pound spot 1.5415 +0.002
D-mark spot 1.6710 +0.0005

LIBOR RATES

Dollar 3 months 5.1250
Dollar 6 months 5.1250
Dollar 12 months 5.1250

FOREIGN FINANCIAL DATA COURTESY OF COMMSTOCK TRADING LTD.

US commodities
Cocoa (Mar) 118.4 -1.25
Sugar (Mar) 20.25 +0.10
Wheat (Mar) 2.15 +0.05

US COMMODITIES AND METALS

US commodities
Cocoa (Mar) 118.4 -1.25
Sugar (Mar) 20.25 +0.10

LONDON COMMODITIES

Cocoa (Mar) 118.4 -1.25
Sugar (Mar) 20.25 +0.10

SPOT MARKET METALS (US)

Copper (Mar) 1.02 -0.01
Silver (Mar) 1.02 -0.01

NEW YORK METAL FUTURES

Copper (Mar) 1.02 -0.01
Silver (Mar) 1.02 -0.01

TEL AVIV STOCKS

Multi-sided trading
Commercial
Bank Leumi 180.00 0.8

Two-sided trading
Name Price Change
Amit 4.75 +0.12

Commercial
Bank Leumi 180.00 0.8
Bank Hapoalim 175.00 0.5

Industrial
Bank Leumi 180.00 0.8
Bank Hapoalim 175.00 0.5

Investment Companies
Bank Leumi 180.00 0.8
Bank Hapoalim 175.00 0.5

Property, Building & Agriculture
Bank Leumi 180.00 0.8
Bank Hapoalim 175.00 0.5

Trade & Services
Bank Leumi 180.00 0.8
Bank Hapoalim 175.00 0.5

Oil Exploration
Bank Leumi 180.00 0.8
Bank Hapoalim 175.00 0.5

PARALLEL LIST
Trade & Services
Bank Leumi 180.00 0.8

INTERNATIONAL STOCK PRICES

NEW YORK
Alcoa 48.25 +0.25
Arista 30.00 +0.10

London
Alcoa 48.25 +0.25
Arista 30.00 +0.10

Frankfurt
Alcoa 48.25 +0.25
Arista 30.00 +0.10

Paris
Alcoa 48.25 +0.25
Arista 30.00 +0.10

Zurich
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Tokyo
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Indexes fall for 2nd day in row

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

208.56 -0.84%
217.00 -0.98%

INDEXES fell yesterday for the second straight day, led by losses in Koor Industries.

Koor was the most active issue on the exchange, falling 1.25 percent as the 9.2 million worth of shares changed hands.

Koor dropped amid speculation foreign investors were selling shares. Koor also announced its intention to seek equity investments in Vietnam.

"I assume it was foreigners," said Idan Azoulay, a portfolio manager at Tel Aviv's B.L.T. Erch Securities and Investment Ltd. Koor's American Depository Receipts traded in New York had fallen 1/8, to 2 1/4 on Monday.

The Maof Index declined 0.98% to 217, and the Two-Sided Index fell 0.84% to 208.56.

Of 998 issues trading across the exchange, more than twice as many shares fell as rose.

More than NIS 100m. worth of shares traded, NIS 19.7m. above Monday's level and about NIS 5m. below the average trading level in January.

Share prices declined amid a lack of private investor interest, said Azoulay.

Tel Aviv investment firm Meitav Ltd. reported that assets held by mutual funds fell to NIS 16.01 billion at the end of December.

The decline came in part from redemptions worth NIS 197m. in January, said the report.

Azoulay said he hoped company earnings reports this month will prompt investor interest. "Expectations are that the reports will be good," he said.

Chemical shares on the Maof Index declined for a second day,

with Israel Chemicals Ltd. falling 0.5%, Dead Sea Works Ltd. dropping 2.75% and Makhteshim Chemical Works Ltd. falling 1.5%.

Dead Sea Bromine Ltd. was an exception, rising 0.75%, as it rebounded from a 3.5% decline Monday. The chemical maker fell after workers were injured in an explosion at a Dead Sea Bromine factory in Ramat Hovav.

Other declining companies on the index included holding company Clal (Israel) Ltd., which fell 1%; and Bezeq, which dropped 0.75%.

Maof Index-listed Osem fell 2%. The food manufacturer refused to comment on speculation that Swiss company Nestle SA was making a bid to raise its 10 percent stake in Osem.

Also listed on the Maof Index, Teva Pharmaceuticals and Bank Hapoalim closed unchanged.

Gaining shares on the Two-Sided Index included Mofet Israel Technology Fund, which rose 1.75%.

Mofet rose because "everybody's watching VocalTec," said Azoulay. Mofet owns a 10% stake in VocalTec, which makes software that lets computer users make cheap phone calls via the Internet.

VocalTec has filed to sell 2.5 million common shares in New York priced at \$16 to \$18 a share. "If the pricing goes according to expectations, there will be huge gains," said Azoulay.

Hotel company Isrotel Ltd., which is not index listed, fell 1%. The company announced it had received permission to build a new hotel in Eilat. (Bloomberg)

FTSE closes slightly up

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

LONDON (Reuters) - UK equities finished slightly higher as the FTSE continued to consolidate after closing at a record high last Friday, a lack of bullish corporate or economic data kept many institutional investors on the sidelines for the second day running.

The FTSE Index closed up 0.9 points to 3,747.5.

FRANKFURT - The Frankfurt bourse ended slightly higher yesterday, as the strength in the German government bond or Bund market helped cancel out the negative effects of a weak dollar.

At the close the blue-chip DAX Index was up 9.27 points to 2,428.28 points. In post-bourse trading the DAX Index stood at 2,437.98.

PARIS - French shares closed higher after having spent much of yesterday in the red, gains on Wall Street and a recovery in bonds helped the stock market edge out a small profit.

The CAC-40 Index closed up 2.88 points, or 0.15 percent, to 1,988.47.

ZURICH - Swiss shares rebounded about two-thirds of Monday's loss to close about 1% higher in moderately active trade. Dealers said firmer bond futures supported sentiment and helped the market ignore the weaker dollar.

The broad SPI index closed 15.75 points higher at 2,130.22.

TOKYO - Shares in Tokyo ended higher, with buyers emerging after the market showed resilience, despite a series of negative factors, including the weak dollar.

Brokers said it confirmed a strong undertone. A recovery in Topix futures also helped turn around sentiment.

The 225-share Nikkei average finished up 97.77 points at 20,751.15.

HONG KONG - Hong Kong stocks closed off their steep lows as a late rally by blue chips moved to be the object of covered warrant issues erased some of the effects of profit taking, brokers said.

The blue-chip Hang Seng Index ended down 92.74 points at 11,391.38.

SYDNEY - The Australian share market ended slightly lower as a positive afternoon session saw buyers bring the market back to nearly square.

The all ordinaries index closed 2.0 points lower at 2,269.7.

JOHANNESBURG - South African shares ended a listless day weak, with golds dampened by a duller bullion price and industrial output amid a lack of direction.

Dealers said golds made a slight recovery in afternoon trade after speculators entered the market but still closed softer.

The all-share index lost 28.3 points to 6,921.9, industrials closed down 7.77 points to 8,538.7 and golds finished off 13.4 to 1,867.5.

Dow closes 50 points higher

WALL STREET REPORT

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Wall Street extended its run into record territory yesterday as stocks of high-technology companies pushed the market higher.

The blue-chip Dow Jones industrial average climbed 52.02

points to close the day at 5,459.61, according to early, unofficial results.

In the broader market, gainers led losers 13-9 on heavy volume of 469 million shares on the New York Stock Exchange.

CURRENCY CROSS-RATES

MARK STERLING YEN SFr FFf
MARK 2.2677/57 - 162.1022 1.8472/91 7.7858/51
STERLING 1.3822/83 0.6164/70 - 1.1391/03 4.8014/94
YEN 122.67/78 0.5408/14 87.72/7N - 4.2125/28
SFr 0.2909/13 0.1283/84 20.79/8N 0.2370/74 -

Commstock Trading Ltd.
Phone from 2230 local time

Ewing leads Knicks over Pistons

NEW YORK (AP) - Patrick Ewing had 25 points and 13 rebounds, and his fadeaway jumper with 1:02 remaining helped the New York Knicks hold off the Detroit Pistons 97-91 on Monday night.

The Knicks wasted most of a 16-point second-half lead, letting the Pistons get within a point in the final 78 seconds before Ewing's basket gave them a cushion. Derek Harper hit four foul shots down the stretch to seal the win.

Allan Houston led Detroit with 24 points, despite sitting out most of the third quarter because of foul trouble.

Trail Blazers 90, Raptors 87

James Robinson's 3-pointer from the top of the key with one-tenth of a second remaining lifted visiting Portland over Toronto.

The Trail Blazers, who trailed 71-62 with 11 minutes left in the game, pulled even at 81 on a Rod Strickland basket with 3:49 remaining.

Arvydas Sabonis put Portland in front 87-85 with just over a minute to play before Damon Stoudamire, who finished with 16 points, hit an 8-foot running jumper to knot the game again with 22 seconds remaining.

That set the stage for Robinson's game-winning shot on a feed from Strickland.

Heat 103, Kings 92

The outside shooting of Rex Chapman and Bimbo Coles complemented Alonzo Mourning's inside play for host Miami.

Mourning had 25 points and 11 rebounds, Chapman scored 24 points and Coles added 21.

Mitch Richmond scored 18 points and Tyus Edney 15 for the Kings.

Jazz 92, Grizzlies 83

Karl Malone muscled his way inside for most of his 31 points as visiting Utah defeated Vancouver. The victory moved the Jazz into first place in the Midwest Division, a half-game ahead of the idle San Antonio Spurs.

MONDAY'S RESULTS:
Portland 90, Toronto 87
New York 97, Detroit 91
Miami 103, Sacramento 92
Minnesota 104, Dallas 92
Utah 92, Vancouver 83
Golden State 128, L.A. Clippers 134

EASTERN CONFERENCE			
Atlantic Division			
Team	W	L	Pct
Orlando	33	13	.717
New York	29	16	.644
Washington	25	22	.500
Miami	21	26	.447
New Jersey	18	27	.400
Boston	17	28	.378
Philadelphia	8	36	.182
Central Division			
Team	W	L	Pct
Chicago	41	9	.818
Indiana	31	15	.674
Atlanta	25	20	.556
Cleveland	22	22	.500
Detroit	22	22	.500
Charlotte	21	23	.477
Milwaukee	16	27	.372
Toronto	13	33	.283
WESTERN CONFERENCE			
Midwest Division			
Team	W	L	Pct
Utah	29	14	.674
San Antonio	28	17	.619
Houston	30	17	.638
Denver	19	26	.422
Dallas	15	29	.341
Minnesota	13	31	.296
Vancouver	10	36	.217
Pacific Division			
Team	W	L	Pct
Seattle	33	12	.733
L.A. Lakers	29	19	.605
Sacramento	24	18	.571
Portland	23	24	.489
Golden State	21	25	.457
Phoenix	20	24	.452
L.A. Clippers	16	30	.348



LOOSE BALL - Sacramento's Tyrus Edney (1) knocks the ball out of the hands of Miami's Bimbo Coles during Monday night's game in Miami.

Magic: 'I'd like playing in NY'

MAGIC Johnson, only three games into his comeback with the Los Angeles Lakers, said he wanted to join the New York Knicks during his retirement and could still end up with the team.

Johnson, who kept in touch with former Lakers and Knicks coach Pat Riley after retiring in 1991, said the two discussed the possibility "every year" and that Lakers management would not trade him.

"I wanted it to be, but we couldn't work it out," Johnson told the *New York Post* on Monday.

"Yeah, we had talked about it. I think I could have helped them at that time. We talked about what it would take and the Lakers said no. That was the bottom line. It never went further than that."

Lakers general manager Jerry West denied he had conversations with the Knicks involving the possibility of a trade.

"There were absolutely none," West told the *Post*. "Earvin says a lot of things we never know about. But he never asked for that. Maybe he'd want to

play there now."

Knicks general manager Ernie Grunfeld supported West, telling the *Post*. "We had no conversations about Magic suiting up in the Garden."

Johnson, 36, who will be an unrestricted free agent at the end of the season, said if he felt the situation wasn't right with the Lakers that New York would be one of his top choices.

"It will be based on my love of the game," Johnson said. "I'll make the decision early enough so that it's good for the team and myself whether I come back here or go someplace else. It would have to be someplace I would enjoy. Like New York."

"I want to win. I'm not going someplace just to go. I'm not coming back here if we're not right. That's the bottom line. I would like to get with a team where it's right. If it's here, let's go. If it's somewhere else, I think the fans would understand that."

Ran, Behr to spearhead Davis Cup squad

DAVIS Cup captain Shlomo Glickstein has decided to opt for a two-pronged attack in the upcoming Euro/African Zone I tie against Norway at Ramat Hasharon this weekend.

Glickstein will call on the services of Israeli No. 1 Eyal Ran (170 in the IBM/ATP rankings), and Noam Behr, who, although he is only the third-ranked Israeli at present (296), is preferred to second-ranked player Eyal Erlich, who is at 209 in the world rankings.

Glickstein said Behr's good results in tournaments in Australia and the Far East over the past few weeks have earned him the right to represent Israel in a "live" singles rubber for the first time.

Erlich, on the other hand, has not shown the sort of form which

Glickstein believes is adequate for a fight like such as this one.

Glickstein is also expected to pick both Ran and Behr as his doubles team, although the options are still open and he doesn't have to name the duo until one hour before the match begins on Saturday at 1:30 pm.

Harel Levy, who is ranked 875, is the fourth member of the squad.

The Norwegians will be led by Christian Ruud, currently ranked 80 in the world and, on paper at least, by far the best of all the players competing in the tie.

But Ruud will have a difficult time in calling in his teammates for adequate support.

The visitors' No. 2, Helge Koll,

is ranked at a lowly 753, while the other two members of the Norwegian squad are very inexperienced - Jan Frode Andersen has a ranking of 1,278 and Helge Rosjo is unranked.

Nevertheless, Davis Cup is a great leveler, and very often rankings count for nothing.

The winner of the tie will advance to the next stage, where they will meet Spain - which lost in the first round of the World Group last year.

Play begins at noon on Friday at Ramat Hasharon with two singles rubbers, when respective No. 1 players play their opposite No. 2 players.

The doubles will be played on Saturday beginning at 1:30 pm, with the reverse singles on Sunday, also starting at 1:30 pm.

UMass stays on top

NEW YORK (AP) - The top 25 teams in The Associated Press' college basketball poll, with first-place votes in parentheses, records through February 4, total points based on 25 points for a first-place vote through one point for a 25th-place vote, and previous ranking:

Rank	Team	Record	Pts	Prv
1.	UMass (58)	21-0	1,641	1
2.	Kentucky (7)	18-1	1,586	2
3.	Kansas	18-1	1,483	3
4.	UConn (1)	21-1	1,468	4
5.	Cincinnati	17-1	1,398	5
6.	Villanova	18-3	1,300	6
7.	Utah	18-3	1,216	7
8.	Georgetown	19-3	1,176	9
9.	Wake Forest	14-3	1,020	12
10.	Penn St.	16-2	1,004	10
11.	Virginia Tech	16-2	976	13
12.	N. Carolina	16-5	930	8
13.	Texas Tech	18-1	798	15
14.	Purdue	17-4	771	17
15.	Memphis	16-4	729	11
16.	Arizona	16-4	707	14
17.	UCLA	15-5	609	19
18.	Syracuse	16-6	500	18
19.	Iowa	15-6	275	16
20.	Louisville	16-6	273	-
21.	Iowa St.	16-4	238	-
22.	Boston College	13-5	229	21
23.	Michigan	15-7	174	20
24.	E. Michigan	16-2	157	23
25.	Stanford	13-5	126	-

Other receiving votes: Arkansas 123, Washington 107, Mississippi St. 79, Wis.-Green Bay 77, Auburn 58, California 51, George Washington 46, Marquette 32, Duke 21, New Mexico 17, Clemson 15, Indiana 13, Col. of Charleston 8, Murray St. 5, Kansas St. 4, Maryland 4, South Carolina 4, N. Carolina 3, Michigan St. 2, Tulsa 2, Vanderbilt 2, Ark.-Little Rock 1, Miss. Valley St. 1, Texas 1.

MONDAY'S TOP 25 RESULT: Villanova 79, Georgetown 66

Bruck does it again

WITHIN two weeks, Yoav Bruck has shattered eight national swimming records and collected five medals to bring Israeli swimming into the world spotlight.

Yesterday, swimming in the 100 meter freestyle final in the Italian Riviera, Bruck finished second to the world champion and set another Israeli record of 48.62 seconds.

His time cut 36 hundredths off his previous record of 48.98s which he set four days ago in Paris when he completed the race in under 49 seconds for the first time. Yesterday Bruck won the silver medal with Alexander Popov from Russia touching the side first with a time of 47.96s.

With this result, Bruck becomes the world's sixth best swimmer in the series of tournaments in short-course (25 meters) pools.

Tomorrow Bruck will compete in the 50m freestyle.

Middlesbrough snags new Brazilian

LONDON (AP) - Brazilian star Middlesbrough. Middlesbrough has lost six straight league games, including a 5-0 hammering by Chelsea on Saturday.

Manager Bryan Robson is looking to shore up his injury-hit club. Juninho has missed two consecutive games with a knee injury.

The 31-year-old Branco would not cost a fee, having bought out his contract at Brazilian club Internacional. But Robson admitted a large salary demand might cause problems.

Which is the player with the longest current streak of Premier League starts?

Alan Shearer
Robbie Fowler
Les Ferdinand
Peter Beardsley

Answer to yesterday's "Guess Who": Alan's Dominique Wilkins was the last forward to lead the NBA in scoring, with a 30.3 average in 1986.

NFL seeks to block franchise moves

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - National Football League Commissioner Paul Tagliabue asked Congress yesterday to give the NFL power to block franchise moves, but got a skeptical reception from some lawmakers.

Tagliabue, at a House of Representatives Judiciary Committee hearing, said the threat of antitrust lawsuits was keeping the NFL from stopping teams from moving. He called for legislation giving the league limited immunity.

"Such legislation - to treat sports leagues as a single enterprise for internal decisions on such matters as franchise relocation - would not freeze the status quo. It simply would allow a sport league to exercise its reasonable business judgment without the threat of antitrust treble damage litigation and, in doing so, to take appropriate account of community interests and fan loyalties," Tagliabue said.

He gave similar testimony at a Senate hearing last month.

Last year, the Los Angeles Rams moved to St. Louis, the Los Angeles Raiders went to Oakland, the Cleveland Browns said they

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SPORTS BRIEFS
British soccer games wiped out by snow
Snow wiped out most of Britain's soccer games yesterday, including the fourth-round FA Cup match between Leeds and Bolton.

The Bolton-Leeds game was rescheduled for February 14, while the FA Cup fourth-round match between Ipswich and Walsall was moved to February 13. *Reuters*

Hershiser interviews with Fox Sports
The Cleveland Indians are still expecting Ori Hershiser to report for spring training next week, even though he has interviewed for a network television job.

Hershiser was in Los Angeles on Monday auditioning with Fox Sports, which begins its baseball telecasts on June 1.

Hershiser signed a contract extension with the Indians that will pay him \$2.7 million in 1997.

He's due to make \$1.5 million with Cleveland this year. *AP*

NHL - Monday's results
Colorado 4, Montreal 2; San Jose 6, Toronto 4. *AP*

Knesset panel blames Bar-Ilan for brochure with Amir's photo

THE Knesset's Education Committee yesterday held Bar-Ilan University responsible for the brochure containing pictures of Yitzhak Rabin's confessed assassin Yigal Amir, printed by the American Friends of Bar-Ilan University.

"The university has [ultimate] responsibility and has to increase its supervision," the committee said in its resolutions following a special debate on the brochure, which was distributed at a festive dinner last month that was attended by university officials.

Committee chairwoman Dalia Itzik said that the university heads had not answered the questions why, when they found the pictures of Amir in the brochure, they had not immediately issued a public apology.

"Is it possible that in some dark places on the campus, or among the donors to the university, there are still some supporters of the *din rodef*?" Itzik asked. "Why are the university authorities so intent on countering criticism rather than putting efforts into soul-searching?"

Turning to newly appointed university president Moshe Kavveh, she asked: "What responsi-

BATSHEVA TSUR

bility do you rake. Mr. President?"

Jane Stern-Lebell, president of the American Friends of Bar-Ilan, apologized "for the pain and embarrassment we have caused to the [university] itself... to all the citizens of Israel and to the Jews throughout the world. She said in a statement on behalf of the organization: "In particular, we extend our deepest regrets and sympathies to our friend Mrs. Leah Rabin for the terrible error."

"We are inquiring into the facts... and shall take those steps that are warranted," she added.

Earlier, the chairman of the university's fund-raising operations in the US, Yehuda Halevy, told the committee that only one person had seen the brochure before the dinner. The head of the public relations department who oversaw the printing of the booklet - in which 12 pictures of Amir appear - had noticed the resemblance to Amir, but thought it was totally impossible that he would appear in a booklet that commemorated the late Rabin, Halevy said.

He described a surrealistic scene in which he said that the pictures were noticed by those attending the dinner only at 10 p.m., when a woman at the head table had a heart attack.

"They called for an ambulance. All the guests remained seated at their tables and started leafing through the booklet for the first time. Someone pointed out the mistake and [recently retired] university president Shlomo Eckstein had the brochures taken away," Halevy said. "Why did you not issue a public apology immediately?" asked Itzik.

"If, God forbid, it had been a girl in a mini would it also only have been noticed so late?" asked MK Rafi Eyal.

When Deputy Minister Walid Salek and MK Abdel Wahab Darawshe intimated there were Amir supporters who had purposely left in the pictures, there were calls of "incitement" from MKs Shaul Bibi (NRP), Ron Nahman (Likud) and Rehavam Ze'evi (Mokedet).

Itzik said the committee was convinced that "a series of ridiculous errors" had led to the events, but that action had to be taken by those responsible.



Finance Minister Avraham Shohat holds a crocodile while visiting Hamat Gader yesterday. He told residents that more than NIS 100 million was invested last year in development projects and in boosting industry on the Golan. Golan Regional Council Chairman Yehuda Wolman said the government was due to provide another NIS 50 million this year for the development of infrastructure and roads in the area. Shohat, who visited several Golan sites yesterday, said residents had the right to lead normal lives as much as possible despite the question mark hanging over the future of the region. (Text: David Rudge; photo: Israel Sun)

Olmert: Swedish Orient House visit an insult

BILL HUTMAN

A planned visit by Swedish Foreign Minister Lena Hjelm Wallen to Orient House is a diplomatic "slap in the face" to Israel, Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert said yesterday. Olmert made the comment in an appeal to the government to prevent the visit.

Sources at City Hall said Olmert has turned to both the Foreign Ministry and Prime Minister's Office with requests the Swedish foreign minister's visit to the PLO headquarters in Jerusalem be stopped.

Olmert said the visit violates

the prohibition on Palestinian Authority diplomatic activity outside of areas under the PA's control, and that the Swedish minister was informed of this but has still insisted she will go ahead with the meeting.

Orient House officials said yesterday that a meeting between Faisal Hussein, the senior PA official in Jerusalem, and Wallen was tentatively scheduled for Saturday. "We are waiting for final confirmation [from the Swedes],"

one Orient House official said.

In his appeals, Olmert noted that the government has until now done nothing to stop such visits, including those in recent months by the Dutch, Italian, Spanish, Irish and French foreign ministers to Orient House.

But the mayor cited recent statements by Prime Minister Shimon Peres, at a press conference last week in London, and Deputy Foreign Minister Eli Dagan, in a newspaper interview,

that indicated further diplomatic activity by the PA would not be tolerated.

The city hall sources said the Foreign Ministry was in fact trying to put pressure on Wallen to cancel her planned visit to Orient House, but apparently to no avail.

Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal has in the past threatened to order police to prevent the visit of senior foreign diplomats to Orient House, although he has never gone through with the threat.

Religious parties await survey to decide on merger for elections

HERB KEINON

THE religious parties are awaiting the results of a survey gauging public support for a united religious front before proceeding further with the idea, Shas head Aryeh Deri, a driving force behind the move, said yesterday.

Deri said that the survey, conducted by the Dahaf Institute, came after a request by National Religious Party head Ze'evulun Hammer and Agudat Yisrael faction head Avraham Shapira.

"The leaders of the parties - Hammer, Shapira and [Degel Hatorah head Avraham] Ravitz - gave me a green light for the survey," Deri said. "I ordered the survey. They say the NRP needs it to convince their MKs of the move, and Agudat Yisrael needs it to show their Council of Sages that a united front will increase

the strength of the religious parties."

Results of a survey indicating that a united Likud-Tsomet front would add to the Knesset strength of the two parties was reportedly a critical factor in the decision to merge. Deri said the results of his survey will be available next week.

"My feeling is that we don't have to make decisions based on a survey," Deri said. "I have no doubt, judging from reactions I get from the public, that such a front will succeed."

Deri said that a substantial number of Likud voters, disillusioned with the Likud's merger with what Deri termed the anti-religious stance of Tsomet, could

find a home in a united religious front.

Deri said a united religious front "is the need of the hour. The NRP, Shas, Aguda and Meimad are all God fearing Jews," he said. "There are differences of opinion, both ideological and political. I do not ignore this, and it would make things difficult. But there is common ground - the Jewish character of the state, the Shabbat.

"When you look at the laws tabled in the Knesset, it is clear that a culture war has developed."

Deri said that one of the benefits of the merger is that instead of the parties expending energy fighting each other, they could unite to form a strong counterweight to Meretz.

No prosecution, just resignations, in case of reported GSS financial wrongdoing

ON LEVY

THE Samaria District GSS commander and three members of his staff that were found guilty of financial irregularities will not be brought up on disciplinary or criminal charges. The State Attorney's Office decided instead to accept their resignations, which they submitted.

The matter came to light after one of the GSS staffers com-

plained about financial wrongdoing in the district.

When outgoing GSS chief Karmi Gillon found out about the matter, he ordered an internal investigation which revealed that the commander of the district, code-named "Gezer," used to borrow money from those under

his command and from the petty cash they had been allocated.

Some of the money was returned by him, while the staff members replaced the rest of the funds.

Following the report, Gillon decided to suspend the four and bring them up on charges, but they told them they planned to resign.

Sneh suggests free drugs, geriatric care

JUDY SIEGEL

HEALTH Minister Ephraim Sneh said yesterday that the Labor Party platform should include a commitment to make prescription drugs free and provide free geriatric care starting in 1997.

Sneh told a meeting of Labor Party veterans that 2,500 sick elderly who need to be institutionalized in geriatric hospitals will no longer have to wait for government-subsidized places if such care is included in the basket of health services to which all residents are entitled. This step, said Sneh, would cost NIS 200 million a year and make supplementary health insurance "completely superfluous."

Sneh also said the Labor Party should advocate free prescription drugs, whose cost is a heavy burden on the elderly. Residents pay NIS 600m. a year as participation in the cost of such drugs, he said. "In a country whose annual gross domestic product is NIS 280 billion, the society is able to afford such a policy, which would greatly ease the burden of pensioners," he concluded.

Asked whether free medications would encourage overuse and waste, ministry spokeswoman Yifat Ben-Hai said Sneh's suggestion was "aimed at helping residents who already pay substantial health taxes."

Knesset moves to grant seniors discounts

LIAT COLLINS

THE country's senior citizens received a boost last night when the Knesset passed a law granting them special rights and discounts in a wide number of fields.

The law is a combination of two bills raised by a number of MKs from different parties, led by Labor faction chairman Ra'anana Cohen, Knesset Labor and Social Affairs Committee Chairman Yossi Katz and Labor and Social Affairs Minister Ora Namir.

Namir will be responsible for its implementation.

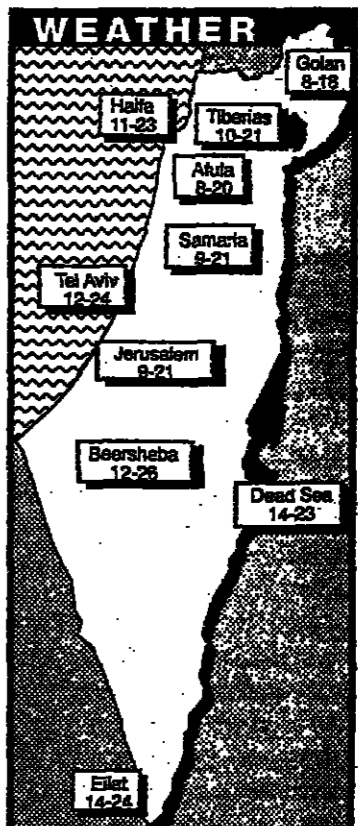
The aim of the law is to avoid a situation in which senior citizens are cut off from their surroundings for financial reasons.

It covers men over age 65 and women above 60.

Among the discounts are television licenses, municipal property taxes, bus and rail services, entrance to national parks and nature reserves, museums, exhibitions, and performances, and medicines.

Couples will be granted the discount jointly for television licenses and property tax.

Each senior citizen will be granted a special identity card to be presented when asking for the discounts.



AROUND THE WORLD

Table with columns for location, low, and high temperatures. Locations include Amsterdam, Berlin, Buenos Aires, Cairo, Chicago, Copenhagen, Frankfurt, Geneva, Hong Kong, Istanbul, Jakarta, London, Los Angeles, Moscow, New York, Paris, and Rome.

Winning cards and numbers

In yesterday's Mifal Hapais daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the queen of spades, eight of hearts, king of diamonds and king of clubs.

In last night's weekly Loto drawing, the winning numbers were 4, 21, 26, 34, 35, 43, and the additional number was 44.

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Advertisement for travel guides. Includes titles like 'The Complete Guide to Israel', 'CARTA'S OFFICIAL GUIDE TO ISRAEL', 'MICHAEL'S GUIDE TO JERUSALEM', 'Discovering Israel', 'The Jewish Travel Guide - 1996', and 'Jewish Travel Guide - 1995'. Each title has a brief description and price. A 'SOLD OUT' banner is visible over the 'Jewish Travel Guide - 1995' section.

Advertisement for MAZADA TOURS. Features 'REGULAR TOURS, HOTELS, PACKAGE DEALS' and 'SEASON'S SPECIAL To JORDAN and EGYPT WITH THE TRAVEL EXPERTS'. Includes contact information for Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and Haifa offices.

Vertical advertisement on the right edge of the page for 'POST TRAVEL' and 'Likud'. Includes text like 'Head of...' and 'Charge...'.